Daily Report

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Soviet Union

FBIS-SOV-91-243 *18 December 1991*

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NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

NOTICE TO READERS: The United States Government recognizes the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

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Worldwide Issues

Repeal of UN Resolution on Zionism Urged

92UF0359A Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 14 Dec 91 Union Edition p 10

[Unattributed article: "It Is Time To Repeal the UN Resolution on Zionism"]

[Text] These days the UN General Assembly is preparing to discuss the question of reversing its own resolution adopted on 10 November 1975, which has caused continuous bitter disputes up to the present moment—the resolution proclaiming Zionism to be a form of racism. The United States is working especially hard to have the resolution overturned.

But this question is especially important to us in the Soviet Union or its legal successors—it was Moscow that played the decisive role in making sure that this resolution, an extremely unusual one in UN history, was adopted 16 years ago. It is distinguished from the majority of documents adopted by the international community over the 46 years of the UN's existence by its confrontational spirit, hostile to one of the full-fledged members of the organization.

The educated mind today justifiably raises doubts about the great value of any nationalistically tinged "isms." But there is no doubt about the unfair nature of the resolution, which is discriminatory toward Jews and toward Israel.

Zionism is a concept that returns the Jews to their historical homeland, and to proclaim that Zionism is racism is tantamount to denying Israel's right to exist. Moreover, the rejection of this formula, which is insulting to Israelis, does not mean denial of the need to honor the legal rights of the Palestinians; on the contrary, it only reinforces the sacred principle of the right of nations to self-determination, which applies both to the Palestinians and to any other people.

The Soviet Government could not but have understood these obvious things 16 years ago when it not only voted for the resolution itself but encouraged its allies to vote for it as well. But under cold war conditions it was considered possible and useful to take advantage of the situation to "weaken the imperialist camp," an indispensable part of which Moscow considered to be Israel and the international Zionist movement.

The adoption of the resolution could not but have led to further aggravation of the situation in the Near East and even greater exacerbation of the conflict. And the USSR made a considerable "contribution" to this. The best political "atonement" for the injustice that was committed would be an active position on the part of the Soviet delegation to the UN today in support of the proposal for immediate reversal of the resolution—which is one more relic of the cold war.

Commentary Examines UN Repeal

LD1712201391 Moscow Radio Moscow in Arabic 1500 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Commentary by unidentified correspondent in New York]

[Text] The UN General Assembly yesterday abrogated the resolution it adopted in 1975 according to which Zionism was considered a form of racism and racial discrimination. The details on the consequences of this action are with our correspondent in New York.

[Correspondent] This step was considered a finished issue in UN circles. There were also predictions with regard to the approximate numbers of the opposing votes and abstentions. It was shown that those predictions were to a large extent correct. Discussions on the consequences to be derived from this decision will now take place.

Israel's happiness is understandable, but the question is what the consequences of this situation will be, as far as the peace process in the Middle East is concerned.

It seems that the United Nations will now be able to assume a more effective role in solving the Arab-Israeli conflict. Up until very recently, the Israeli Government rejected categorically any UN participation in the peace process, under the pretext of the resolution of 1975. Following that, most UN and UN Security Council resolutions on the Middle East issues were considered null and void. Now Israel will have to change not only its tactics, but also its policy. Israel will be compelled to drop the slogan "Death to the anti-Zionist United Nations." Thus a more realistic formula for a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict will be sought.

On the other hand, it must be said that after the adoption of the decision to abrogate the anti-Zionist resolution, the UN General Assembly has adopted a series of documents the main contents of which blame Israel for continuing its occupation of Arab territories. For instance, a decision considering the resolution according to which Israeli laws should apply to all Jerusalem as null and void was adopted with one vote opposing it—in other words, that of Israel.

Interpol Chief Gives News Conference on Crime

LD1812020991 Moscow TASS in English 1507 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Sergey Oleinik and Yuriy Soltys]

[Text] Moscow December 17 TASS—Addressing a press conference in the Soviet Interior Ministry today, Interpol General Secretary Raymond Kendall said his international organisation can and is prepared to make its contribution to efforts to curb the rising crime rate in the Soviet Union.

Interpol unites police services from over 150 countries. The USSR joined the organisation in autumn last year.

According to Kendall, cooperation between Interpol and Soviet police is already producing specific results. For instance, Interpol national central bureau has handled upwards of 6,000 pieces of information about crimes in the USSR and abroad starting from January 1, 1991, which helped uncover them promptly. This information concerned mostly drug trafficking and the contraband of stolen cars from Western Europe to the Soviet Union.

On plans for the future, Kendall said Interpol could help the Soviet Union combat economic and financial crimes.

Asked about the possibility of new sovereign states of the former Union joining Interpol, Kendall noted that only Lithuania had applied for admission to the organisation so far. This request was met. He emphasised the road is also open to other republics.

Kendall confirmed that cooperation with the Soviet Interior Ministry under the treaty signed a year ago would be continued.

United States & Canada

U.S. Secretary of State's Visit Assessed

PM1812130391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 18 Dec 91 p 4

[Political Observer Tomas Kolesnichenko commentary under "My Opinion" rubric: "Et Tu, Baker..."]

[Text] It turns out that Washington has tackled in earnest something that we cannot do ourselves. Secretary of State Baker is to take back to Congress and the U.S. President from his trip to Moscow and other capitals of the former republics specific answers to specific questions: With whom, after all, are the Americans to deal in the former USSR; does stability exist there, or is there a real danger of chaos and a social explosion as a result of the economic disaster; what is the fate of the nuclear weapons and, finally, in whose hands are they?

And, of course, the United States would not be the United States if it were not interested in the human rights situation in our country. Incidentally, the last point boils down, once again, to the question of whether we will have peace or civil war.

The protocol of Baker's visit itself says a lot. It was not for nothing that U.S. universities spent long years studying and even feeding into computers the lineup of leaders on the mausoleum and their seating in presidiums at the time of festivals. Although Baker is in no hurry to recognize Russia (Norway has already outdistanced everyone), Washington's priority is no longer in doubt. The U.S. secretary of state's meeting with Gorbachev recalls his meeting with Shevardnadze at the time when the latter was no longer foreign minister. And, to judge by the recent events in the Kremlin, it can be assumed that Baker was the first to learn what might await Gorbachev in the very near future. But this was not just a courtesy visit. Unlike us, people in the United States do not humiliate former idols and, in the main, criticize those who are in power, not those who are already receding into the shadows. There can be no doubt that the name of M.S. Gorbachev, if not in our country then in theirs, will always be linked with the metamorphosis of our country.

But all this does not alter the tough, pragmatic attitude toward the former superpower, the situation which requires from Washington a totally new approach, including official relations. So, on seeing off the secretary of state, both Gorbachev and his immediate entourage probably thought: "Et tu, Baker." But such are the "new realities," as we like to say.

So, all is clear as regards protocol. Recognition for Russia and other former republics (which meet standard U.S. requirements) is a matter for the very near future. But in point of fact?

Things are far more complex here. Although Baker declared at a news conference that he is more clear about our nuclear weapons, I believe that misgivings remain. They remain, above all, because we ourselves still do not fully understand what the "dual, triple key" is or who, after all, has it. For it was precisely while Baker was in Moscow that reports appeared that people in the Transcaucasus are already trading in tactical weapons, and even though these reports have been officially denied, I do not think that this can reassure the West so easily.

What is required is firm guarantees; and, for this, urgent, immediate accords among the leaders of the new Commonwealth of Independent States are needed. As long as there are none, this question will remain. Moreover, given the muddle here, the problem of the leaking of strategic secrets and even the transfer of nuclear technology to third persons is an ever-increasing one. I am referring to rich Near East regimes which dream of creating their own nuclear weapons and are prepared to pay hundreds of millions of dollars.

But the economy is the chief thing. A paradox: The West is perfectly well aware, and says so openly, that the former USSR needs great material assistance in order to survive the winter without social upheavals. But at the same time a classic response takes effect: not to invest money in something dubious. Therefore, there is far more talk than assistance. And it is this, in my view, that poses the chief danger which could reduce the West's best intentions to naught and face it not only with the need for still greater expenditure but also with the situation which it so fears.

In the end, Baker's visit has resolved little and will produce little but new impressions for Washington. People there are plainly failing to keep up with events in our country. At the very moment that it seems to Washington that it understands what is happening in the country which used to be the opposing superpower, some new event takes place there and totally changes the situation. It has to recast obsolete political plans and intelligence analysis reports which suddenly become untenable.

And yet Strauss, U.S. ambassador to the USSR, as well as Baker, are, evidently, full of optimism. As the U.S. ambassador said, if the 20th century began in August 1914, with the start of World War I, what has been happening in the Soviet Union since August 1991 could subsequently be regarded as the start of the 21st century.

This sounds fine. But the words of the poet also sound no less fine: "The more interesting an epoch is to a historian, the sadder it is for its contemporaries."

Solton Commentary on Ties

LD1812024191 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1310 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Commentary by Yuriy Solton]

[Excerpts] The visit by the United States Secretary of State, James Baker, to the Soviet Union is the opening topic discussed by Yuriy Solton. Here is what he writes. [passage omitted]

It is difficult to predict the future for ourselves. A glance from the outside may be helpul. Still things look certain about two issues that worry most both the United States and ourselves: I mean the future of Soviet nuclear weapons and the future foreign policy of this country. Some people, particularly the concerned Western politicians, want to see international control established over the Soviet nuclear arsenal. But why not establish such control over the nuclear arms of the other nuclear countries? It is clear today that there should appear no new nuclear countries on the territory of the former Soviet Union. Centralized control over the strategic nuclear forces is to be carried out, as it has been decided, from some kind of a center no matter what shape it retains.

The Soviet-American relations are entering a critical phase and not because there has again appeared the likelihood of confrontation but because there is a risk now that there will be a departure from the former cooperation. The newly established relations of partnership have brought many good things for the peoples of the Soviet Union and the United States. They have had a beneficial effect on the international situation. It is important to keep up the trend. I am sure that no former Soviet republic, as it has gained independence, would wish a worsening of relations with the United States. Russia is least of all to do that.

U.S. Experts Discuss Arms 'Conversion Race'

LD1812000491 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2119 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "External Economic Relations" section]

[Text] Group of influential U.S. experts suggest that series of restrictions on export of COCOM listed equipment to Russia be lifted. [sentence as received]

This was reported to PF [POSTFACTUM] 17 December by the deputy chair-person of the Presidium of the Urals branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences Yuriy Vershinin, commenting on the results of the visit to Perm made by a group of U.S. experts headed by the former chief of the U.S. nuclear submarine fleet General William Burns. The U.S. delegation which visited Perm 15-17 December visited two major war industry centers—October Revolution Engineering Works and Perm Scientific Research Technology Institute with the aim in view of familiarizing themselves with the progress of conversion in Russia. The members of the delegation were very careful in evaluating what they had seen while talking to journalists emphasizing that their visit was unofficial—through cooperation of two non-governmental organizations: The U.S. National Academy and the USSR Academy of Sciences.

Yuriy Vershinin maintains that the task the given group of experts was faced with was to present an objective report on the mainlines of U.S. aid for Russian conversion program to the U.S. Administration. Robert Clark, the science counsellor of the U.S. Embassy to the USSR, was a member of the delegation.

Commenting on the results of the visit, Vershinin reported to PF that the sides had arrived at a conclusion on the necessity of cooperation between the USSR and the USA after the formulation not arms race but conversion race. This formulation provides for a mutual exchange of technologies of double usage that is making possible their use for both military and civilian purposes. Lifting of certain restrictions from COCOM list is meant to be a condition for such exchanges. The U.S. industries are in a position to digest our technologies and know-how but for us to be able to use U.S. technologies we must have U.S. equipment, Vershinin substantiated this condition.

The second condition necessary to implement the conversion race concept is considered by the Americans to be the establishment of a reliable control system over the use of technologies received with the aim in view of preventing their use in military production. The sides have not found a mutually acceptable solution of this problem to date. Knowledgeable sources close to the Urals branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences say that a number of top executives of Perm's war industries Kirov scientific and production conglomerate, for instance whom the director of Perm scientific center of the Urals branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences Yuriy Klyachkin had requested to receive the U.S. delegation did not agree. Glenn Schweitzer, head of the USSR and East European countries of the U.S. National Academy, told PF that at October Revolution works the Americans had only been shown around the bicycle shop accounting for an insignificant part of the total volume of production of the enterprise.

17 December the delegation left for Moscow to visit Khrunichev engineering works, Energia, Almaz and Technologhia scientific and production conglomerates.

U.S. Medical Aid Arrives in Moscow

LD1712202191 Moscow TASS in English 1636 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Andrey Pershin]

[Text] moscow December 17 TASS—U.S. and Soviet military cargo planes landed in Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport on Tuesday [17 December] bringing about ten million U.S. dollars' worth of U.S. Medical equipment and medicines for Soviet children's hospitals and clinics.

The aid is part of a campaign launched by Eduard Shevardnadze, president of the Soviet foreign policy association, in the spring of 1991 and supported by the U.S. non-governmental organisation "International Foreign Policy Association," which raised the necessary funds over several months.

Ten other batches of aid will soon be delivered to the Soviet Union.

The campaign is patronised by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian Republic President Boris Yeltsin, as well as Moscow city authorities and business concerns, who will pay for transportation and distribution of aid.

Shevardnadze Receives Former U.S. Ambassador

LD1712214991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1830 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS)—Today Eduard Shevardnadze, minister of external relations, received A. Heartman, former U.S. ambassador to the USSR and consultant on business strategy in the countries of Eastern Europe for many large U.S. firms. In a friendly and honest conversation, they discussed questions of the internal situation in the USSR and U.S. humanitarian aid, as well as some precise problems in the elimination of chemical weapons. This was reported by the information department of the USSR Ministry of External Relations.

China

Correspondent Assesses Li Peng Visit to India

92UF0350A Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 11 Dec 91 p 4

[Article by PRAVDA correspondent Vladlen Baykov: "Good Start"]

[Text] Delhi—**Li Peng, premier of the Chinese People's Republic State Council, arrives in Delhi on an official visit today. Both the capital of India and Beijing are putting big hopes in the visit of the head of the Chinese Government and his negotiations with Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and other officials.**

Relations between the two great neighbor states have long been reminiscent of the swing of a pendulum: from friendly, almost fraternal relations at the start of the 1950's, they "swung" to the armed conflict of 1962, which was followed by prolonged brinkmanship. A surge of bilateral activity has once again been observed since the mid-1980's. The high point was the time of the visit to the PRC in 1988 by then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Not that much time has elapsed since then, it would seem, but unpredictable changes in the international arena are now happening so rapidly and the alignment of forces in it is changing so impetuously. On this occasion, the newspaper TIMES OF INDIA observes, the leaders of India and China are meeting under the conditions "of a totally new world order, when both countries have been deprived of the political cards they were previously accustomed to playing in their foreign policy."

The end of the "cold war" period, the collapse of dogmatic socialism in East Europe, the disintegration of the Soviet Union—these realities of the day require critical comprehension and decisive adjustments in the foreign policies of the two countries. Specifically, India, local diplomatic circles are pointing out, can no longer count on its former true ally in international affairs—the Soviet Union, whose leaders are openly declaring their "new priorities"—a reorientation of foreign policy toward the West and the United States.

The situation within India remains complex. It is experiencing a period of political instability, when for the past three years several governments have been replaced at the helm of power. The activity of the separatists in Punjab, Kashmir, and Assam and the stimulation of the forces of religious and communal strife are threatening the country's national unity. The economic situation is deteriorating, and the external debt is growing. It is understandable that, finding itself in such a situation, India is now seeking new strong points and, of course, trying not to let slip an opportunity to improve relations with its neighbor.

The Chinese side also has many reasons to aspire to more than ordinary working contacts with India. Following the Tiananmen Square events of 1989, China has found itself isolated. Western countries and the United States are incessantly attacking its leadership for a "violation of human rights" and putting pressure on for the purpose of fundamentally changing the social system in China under the flag of bourgeois liberalization, and they have imposed a number of economic sanctions on the country.

In the face of the concentrated pressure of the Western states, China is now in need of extensive foreign political and economic support. India could render this support to a certain extent. "A most suitable time," the TIMES OF INDIA emphasizes, "has arrived for closing the era of confrontation between the two leading powers of the 'third world' and for making a good start in their relations."

Li Peng's present visit pursues the aim of an improvement in them primarily in the political sphere. There remain here too many unsolved questions as yet. Although in accordance with the agreement achieved

during Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Beijing the parties have carried out a partial pullback of forces from the border (approximately 50,000 men per side), it has not yet been made, as promised at that time, a "border of peace and tranquillity." The dispute over territorial issues has not been resolved. Approximately 100,000 Tibetan refugees have lived in India since the 1950's, and the Dalai Lama lives in exile, which is causing irritation in Beijing. There are disagreements in the sides' positions on the question of assurance of the security of the "Asian home."

At the same time, on the other hand, the two countries have a similar approach to many international problems. The fact that, as distinct from China's other neighbors, India's foreign policy is characterized by far greater predictability and constancy is appreciated in Beijing also, I believe.

The official ideology in the PRC does not disturb Delhi. It would like to see China's gradual and evolutionary adaptation to the new international realities, not the strict pressure of the West aimed at compelling it to take the path of bourgeois reforms.

Indian political circles are expressing the hope that the two countries will embark in earnest on an improvement in mutual relations. "At the upcoming negotiations," the newspaper BUSINESS AND POLITICAL OBSERVER writes, "India will display initiative and will extend to China the hand of friendship." There is every reason to believe that it will not be left dangling.

Near East & South Asia

Israeli Agreement Received on Bovin Appointment

PM1812120091 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, RIA, REUTER column]

[Text] USSR President M. Gorbachev has officially appointed Aleksandr Yevgenyevich Bovin, former IZVESTIYA political observer, as USSR ambassador to the State of Israel.

This decision was made a few weeks ago, but before making the official appointment it was necessary to obtain the consent (agreement) of the Israeli Government. This has now been received.

Indian 'Concern' Over Aircraft Spares Viewed

PM1712152191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 Dec 91 p 4

[Own correspondent Vladilen Baykov report: "Avia-India 91"]

[Text] Delhi, 15 Dec—The demonstration of Soviet aviation equipment has ended at Avia-India 91, the Delhi international air show. Our section was the largest in terms of planes and helicopters displayed and attracted increased attention from specialists.

Summarizing the results of business contacts, Soviet delegation head V. Ivanov noted that Indian-Soviet partnership in research and the production of new types of equipment initiated by the Soviet side could be a highly promising new area.

At the same time, cooperation between the two countries in the aviation sphere is going through difficult times now. Disruptions have begun in the supply of spare parts from the former Union to Indian air force. The concern expressed by the Indian side on this matter is understandable. Addressing a news conference, the head of the Soviet delegation assured the Indian partners that all measures will be taken to rectify the situation in the immediate future.

Sub-Saharan Africa

South African President Postpones Visit

92UF0351A Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 12 Dec 91 p 3

[Article by S. Ivanov: "Why Is No One Coming To See Us?"]

[Text] The visit of South African President Frederik de Klerk to Moscow had been scheduled for Friday 13 December. For a person given to the mysticism of dates and figures, such a combination could hardly have signified success in the initiation of anything important. According to certain forecasts, in the course of meetings with the Soviet side de Klerk was to have discussed questions of the restoration of diplomatic relations. A step toward which he was being prompted by the logic of the contacts that are taking shape with our country, the domestic political situation in South Africa, and the conditions of South Africa's political and economic isolation from the outside world.

There has long been a pressing need for legalized relations between the USSR and South Africa. Both countries are losing out in economic relations on account of the lack of coordination in the advance gold sales on the world market. The USSR and South Africa are practically monopolists on the uncut diamonds market. There are good prospects for cooperation in mining and oil industry. The South Africans are ready to assist us in the sphere of conversion. Versions of cooperation in aircraft manufacturing have been studied.

In South Africa de Klerk is called the South African Gorbachev. It may be argued to what extent this is a nice compliment for a politician today. But it was de Klerk who struck palpable blows at the authoritarian regime and the racism which was official policy for more than 40 years. The president's first specific step was his speech in parliament on 2 February of last year, in which he announced the legalization of the ANC [African

National Conference], the South African Communist Party, the Pan-African Congress, and other previously proscribed organizations. "Apartheid prisoner No. 1," Nelson Mandela, leader of the ANC, was released following 27 years of imprisonment.

De Klerk is a realist and pragmatist. His views have evolved from those of a fierce supporter of apartheid to a moderate liberal. He is one of those who has recognized that the apartheid regime is impeding the country's economic growth and fettering business initiative. The president possesses the necessary qualities for a good politician: He is cool-headed and sensible and knows how to listen and to persuade.

So the person who in his own country has embarked upon "Pretoriastroyka" (by an analogy, which is drawn in South Africa, with the name of our reforms) has turned down a trip to Moscow, explaining this, as follows from FRANCE-PRESSE information, by the fact that he did not want "to be in the country at the very moment when a military coup was taking place there." A strong trump card. Let the actual style of the announcement be on the conscience of the press agency.

South Africa, incidentally, is as yet little different from a country in a state of war. Last weekend 23 persons died in Soweto following a demonstration of Zulus from the Inkatha Freedom Party grouping.

Is de Klerk really shocked by recent events in the Soviet Union, primarily the agreement of the Slav republics? According to a statement on 10 December, Tuesday, by Gerrit Olivier, head of the South African Interests Section in Moscow, the agreement between Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine could not influence the program of the official visit. The planned meeting with Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and Nazarbayev and the possibility of witnessing the decentralization process would have afforded de Klerk additional arguments in support of the unity of his own country at the unifying convention scheduled for 20-21 December, in which, it is anticipated, approximately 20 political organizations and the government of the country will participate. At the convention it is planned to discuss the future constitutional arrangement of South Africa. It was to the president's work schedule on the eve of such an important forum that the South African Foreign Ministry referred on Tuesday in its official statement explaining the reasons for such abrupt changes in de Klerk's plans.

I fear that a good opportunity for establishing official diplomatic relations now via the central authorities has been let slip. Who knows how long the process of mutual recognition at the former republics of the USSR-South Africa level will drag on.

East Europe

Prosecutors Seek TV Men Missing in Yugoslavia

PM1712154991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Dec 91 Second Edition p 3

[TASS report: "Group of USSR Prosecutor's Office Staff Start Investigating Disappearance of Soviet Journalists in Yugoslavia"]

[Text] Belgrade, 12 Dec—A group of USSR Prosecutor's Office staff who recently arrived in Yugoslavia to investigate the circumstances of the disappearance of Soviet television journalists Viktor Nogin and Gennadiy Kurinnogo has had meetings in the SFRY Federal Secretariat for Internal Affairs in the past days.

During their conversations they were briefed in detail on the measures taken by the Yugoslav side to try to find the Soviet journalists and the problems aggravating the search. It was agreed that a meeting would take place in the next few days with representatives of the internal affairs organs of the individual Yugoslav republics, which have also been making efforts to ascertain what has happened to Nogin and Kurinnogo.

The SFRY Federal Secretariat of Internal Affairs assured the Soviet lawyers that it will continue the current search. At the same time it again urged all citizens who have any information regarding the Soviet journalists to report it to the nearest militia station or internal affairs organ.

Today the Soviet investigators, accompanied by staff of the USSR Embassy in Belgrade, traveled to areas of West Slavonia controlled by the Yugloslav People's Army [JNA]. The most likely route taken by Viktor and Gennadiy to cover the situation from Yugoslavia's "trouble spots" is located there, near the towns of Kostajnica and Dubnica. These "spots" and "centers" have now become areas on or close to the front line, where combat operations are being conducted by the JNA, the Serbian border militia, and Croat formations.

West Europe

Gorbachev Meets With German Radio Director

Previews Alma-Ata Conference

LD1712180591 Hamburg DPA in German 1627 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow (DPA)—Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev will make a decision on his political fate after the 21 December meeting of the heads of the Central Asian and Slavic republics in the Kazakh capital, Alma-Ata. The head of state stated this during a meeting here with Friedrich Nowottny, the WDR (West German Radio) managing director. "Everything depends on Alma-Ata," Gorbachev said. He is more than 80 percent in agreement with Russian President Boris Yeltsin. He reaffirmed that he did not wish the Russian reforms to fail.

Also today, Gorbachev and Yeltsin met for another talk on the situation after the decision made in Brest to found a Commonwealth of Independent States. No details of the meeting are known at the moment.

Nowottny briefed the Soviet president about the "A Heart For Russia," an ARD (First German Television) and BILD newspaper joint aid project.

Expects Honecker To Leave

LD1712150491 Hamburg DPA in German 1416 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow (DPA)—Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev expects that the former GDR head of state and party chairman, Erich Honecker, will leave for North Korea in the next few days. In a conversation with West German Radio Managing Director Friedrich Nowottny, Gorbachev said in Moscow today: "I believe Honecker will leave for North Korea." Honecker will disappear from the scene in a few days time.

Spokesman on Meeting

LD1712155291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1509 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Viktor Runov]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS)—Andrey Grachev, head of the USSR president's press service, concentrated journalists' attention at a briefing on a meeting held today between Mikhail Gorbachev and Friedrich Novottny, chief of ARD, the first channel of West German television. (Novottny is an initiator and organizer of humanitarian aid to the USSR.) Leaders of the Committee on Providing Humanitarian Aid to the USSR, which was set up recently by the USSR president and headed by Professor Svyatoslav Fedorov, also took part in the conversation.

A great deal of attention was given to how to effectively organize the supply and distribution of aid to the USSR and how to ensure it gets to the people who really need it.

The conversation also touched upon the problem of the fate of former GDR leader Erich Honecker. The USSR president asked for this topic to be left alone for at least a few days. He expressed the hope that in that time the problem would somehow be resolved, Andrey Grachev noted.

Shevardnadze Favors 'Free Passage' for Honecker

LD1612123291 Berlin ADN in German 1138 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Text] Hamburg (ADN)—Russian Justice Minister Federov told BILD newspaper about the Honecker case: "If Herr Honecker does not have a diplomatic passport then we have the possibility of arresting him. Then he will be extradited to Germany. However, should he have a diplomatic passport from the People's Republic of North Korea, then we no longer have the right to intervene."

Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze told the same newspaper: "I am in favor of granting Honecker free passage. Nobody will stop him. Honecker himself should decide where he wants to go. We shall not take any action on the way from the Chilean Embassy to the airport."

Shevardnadze Statements Denied

LD1712184491 Moscow TASS in English 1734 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 17 TASS—Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze neither made any statements regarding the fate of former leader of the GDR Erich Honecker nor commented on that subject in Western mass media, the ministry press department announced today.

The statement was made in response to a TASS request for confirmation or denial of the German news agency DPA's report on December 16 which alleged that Shevardnadze made comments on Honecker's future in an interview to the newspaper BILD.

Further Reportage on Honecker Situation

Embassy Points Out 'Inaccuracy'

LD1512133291 Moscow TASS in English 1324 GMT 15 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Petukhov]

[Text] Moscow December 15 TASS—The North Korean Embassy in Moscow points out that there was an inaccuracy in the December 14 statement by Russia's Justice Minister Nikolay Fedorov.

In that statement the minister said that the Government of the Russian Federation knew of the readiness of the North Korean authorities to receive former East German leader Erich Honecker but that "they did not apply to Russia in this connection".

The North Korean Embassy did apply to Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the morning of December 13, officially stating its readiness to receive Honecker, an embassy spokesman told TASS over the telephone today.

The embassy's statement was received by Vasiliy Tsaplin, deputy head of the ministry's Department for the Asia-Pacific Region, the embassy spokesman said.

Chilean Embassy Acknowledges Presence

PM1312151291 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Feature comprising two undatelined TASS reports plus Sergey Semendyayev report: "Fate of a Communist in Exile"]

[Text] [First TASS report] Erich Honecker, former GDR state and party leader, has taken refuge on the territory of the Chilean Embassy in Moscow in order to avoid extradition to Germany. This was stated in Bonn by an FRG Foreign Ministry spokesman.

According to the German diplomat, Germany's foreign policy department was informed of the event by Chilean colleagues the previous evening. It has appealed to the Chilean Government, demanding that E. Honecker be made to leave the Chilean Embassy building in the USSR.

In accordance with recent decisions of the Russian leadership the 79-year-old E. Honecker is threatened with extradition to Germany unless he leaves the republic's territory by Saturday, 14 December.

[Second TASS report] Chile will not grant political asylum to Erich Honecker, leader of the former GDR, because he "is not being persecuted by any dictatorship," Chilean President Patricio Aylwin said on local television Wednesday, 11 December. He noted that E. Honecker's lack of a German passport is not the main reason for the Chilean authorities' negative attitude to his going there.

P. Aylwin stressed that political asylum in Chile can be granted to any citizen without his having an appropriate passport or visa. But this only applies to persons who are being persecuted by dictatorial regimes, whereas "the German Government is democratic, and human rights are observed in that country," the Chilean president noted. In his opinion the granting of political asylum to E. Honecker in Chile would be contrary to the provisions of international law.

[Semendyayev report] After receiving a report from Bonn that Erich Honecker, the former leader of the "first worker-peasant state on German soil," had taken refuge on the territory of the Chilean Embassy in Moscow, the ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA editorial office contacted Chile's diplomatic mission in Moscow on the telephone. It is interesting to note that initially Chilean diplomats refuted the Bonn report most authoritatively and officially. But in the afternoon it had "become clear" that Honecker is indeed under the same roof as them. They declined to give any details about his arrival and presence on embassy premises.

TASS: Honecker Still in Embassy

LD1712123191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1110 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Viktor Runov]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS)—It looks as though the fate of the leader of the former GDR Erich Honecker will be settled in the very near future through the efforts of the DPRK and Russia, who are holding intensive talks on this problem. According to the latest reports, Erich Honecker is still staying as a guest at the Chilean Embassy in Moscow which is now showing no visible initiative toward settling the matter of where its guest will stay in the future.

A high-ranking official of the Ministry of External Relations of the USSR, expressing his personal opinion in a conversation with the TASS correspondent, noted that Honecker's departure for Pyongyang would be "a way out of a deadlocked diplomatic situation." Only in this manner, in his view, can "this matter be unblocked and a humane form of solution to the problem be observed" at the present time.

DPRK Embassy counsellor told TASS that the North Korean side "has already defined its position regarding Honecker quite clearly and is now merely awaiting the reaction of the Russian authorities which have to give permission for the former leader of the GDR to depart for the DPRK".

Further Reportage on Republic Ties With Turkey

OW1812063291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1927 GMT 18 Dec 91

[From the "Soviet Business Report;" transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Circumstances have never been more auspicious for strong economic, as well as political links, to be forged between Turkey and the now independent Muslim republics, which span the southern belt of the former USSR. The eagerness with which Soviet Muslim leaders appealed to the 160 top Turkish businessmen, attending last week's conference in Moscow of the Turkish-Soviet Business Council, for investment, technical assistance and training in the ways of the market economy was clear evidence of their need for a "big brother"—preferably one with whom they have ethnic ties—as they venture into independence.

But Turkey Keeps Its Eye on the Dominant Republics

But Turkey, although it is indeed interested in expanding commercial and cultural relations with the Muslim republics, is not overly sentimental on this issue. The dominant and wealthy republics—Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan—are the republics with whom Turkey's realistic businessmen are especially anxious to do business.

Turkey's commercial ties with the USSR were negligible until the late 1980s. An agreement had been reached in 1984 to provide Turkey with natural gas, but it was only when the pipeline was finally conpleted in late 1987 that the basis was laid for a continuing and expanding relationship. Gradually, the supplies of Soviet gas expanded to reach the current level of 4.1 bn cu m [billion cubic meters] annually. Turkey pays for the gas in hard currency ($400,000 this year).

Under the agreement, the USSR is obliged to spend 35% of the money received from Turkey on purchasing

Turkish goods, 25% is paid to Turkish construction firms for various building projects in the USSR, and 40% is the USSR's to spend as it likes.

A considerable volume of bilateral trade, however, supplements exchanges under the gas agreement, and this year total turnover is expected to exceed $2 bn [billion], a three-fold increase since 1988. In addition to gas, the USSR exports diesel and crude oil, tractors, machine tools and Lada cars. Turkey has been supplying the Soviet republics with wheat, flour, various foodstuffs, textiles and leather goods.

Turkish Building Firms Bask in Their Good Reputation

Undoubtedly Turkey's star performers on the Soviet economic scene are its construction companies. In a Soviet landscape dotted with unfinished building sites, Turkish firms have quickly gained a reputation for high quality building, reasonable prices, and completion ahead of schedule. At present there are 30 Turkish construction firms (and 12,000 Turkish workers) engaged in projects as varied as providing housing for Soviet military personnel returning from Germany, to building hospitals and resort complexes, to establishing facilities in the Donets Basin for processing slag from coal mines.

At last week's meeting, Moscow's deputy mayor Yuriy Luzhkov appealed to Turkey's construction firms to help upgrade the dilapidated city. "The city of Moscow owns 80% of all the buildings, the entire transportation system and many other facilities. We await your suggestions," Luzhkov said. As payment, Luzhkov proposed a complex system of triangular barter. But with other speakers pointing out that Russia would probably block such an arrangment, it was not surprising that Turkish builders seemed inclined to hold back.

Direct Links Now Formed With Virtually all the Republics

About a year and half ago Turkey, with the permission of the USSR's central government, initiated direct economic relations—and soon signed trade agreements—with neighbouring Soviet republics: Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Moldova. And in recent weeks, as the presidents of Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan (with Kyrgyzstan's president soon to follow) made official visits to Ankara, bilateral business councils in each of the Muslim republics also started to sprout. Furthermore, direct air links are now planned between Turkey and the capitals of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, with road and rail links also to run from Ashkabad, through Iran, and on to Turkey.

Many of the speakers from the Muslim republics suggested that Turkey start joint ventures in their areas, and also provide them with training in such fields as international banking practice. Training and advice, the Turks would of course be happy to provide but there was noticeably less enthusiasm about joint ventures.

Quasi-Barter Would Solve Payment Problems

With direct commercial transactions now virtually impossible in view of the non-convertibility of the ruble and the dearth of hard currency in the hands of potential Soviet partners, Turkey has decided to press for bilateral agreements to be drawn up with the individual republics—similar to the gas agreement that has long been the backbone of trade with the USSR as a whole. Thus, the agreement with Russia could be enlarged to include not only gas, but petroleum, coal and timber. A similar agreement could be drawn up with Ukraine for coal, iron and steel. With Kazakhstan, for coal. With Turkmenistan, for natural gas. And with Kyrgyzia, for coal. In exchange, Turkey would provide the republics with foodstuffs, consumer goods and medicine, while its construction firms could carry out various assignments.

Meanwhile, confident that trade with the various republics will increase, Turkey has already started improving facilities on its side of the border crossing points.

In addition, the Turks plan to set up a business center in Moscow. It would provide visiting Turkish businessmen with interpreters, offer a complete, computerized data base on all the republics and, in general, eliminate the need for each newcomer to the area to start learning all about the USSR and its republics from scratch.

In February, the Turkish-Ukrainian Business Council will hold a conference in Kiev, siilar to the one recently concluded in Moscow.

Mitterrand's Address on Gorbachev Reviewed

PM1712131191 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 17 Dec 91 p 3

["Our correspondent" N. Dolgopolov report: "Help is Coming, But It Is Not Here Yet"]

[Text] Paris—Everyone knows that Gorbachev and Mitterrand are not only presidents, but friends too. However, yesterday's television address by Francois Mitterrand sounded like a requiem for Mikhail Sergeyevich. Describing Gorbachev as "one of the most important figures of the age," the French head of state expressed his admiration for him and at the same time something like condolences. This is something new in the position of Mitterrand, who has always backed Gorbachev and him alone. It may be assumed that much that we still do not know was made clear to the French president during the 14 December telephone conversation with Gorbachev and 15 December telephone conversation with President Bush.

Mitterrand is ready to sit down at the negotiating table with the three representatives of the former USSR at the conference of European nuclear powers proposed by the French: "The main thing is that nuclear weapons be under control." But the Frenchman has virtually rejected Bush's proposed international conference in Washington to coordinate aid to the former Soviet Union, describing

the idea as "redundant." He stressed that the Europeans are helping us much more than the Americans and that their contribution amounts to 80 percent of all aid.

Be that as it may, very unpleasant news for us has just been announced in Paris. France has blocked 2 billion francs of credits allocated to us. These credits were intended, as LE FIGARO states, to purchase wheat for the country and food for Moscow. We would have paid for this sometime in the future by supplying oil. An explanation for the temporary blocking of credit has come from the French Finance Ministry: "Our partners no longer exist, The situation is paradoxical. We undertook this operation to help the Soviets. But who will accept the aid?"

France Blocks Grain Purchase Credit Guarantees

PM1712134991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 17 Dec 91 p 4

[Correspondent Vladimir Bolshakov report under the "In Mirror of Events" rubric: "Credit Blocked"]

[Text] Paris, 16 Dec—Journalists here have been told that France has blocked commodity credit guarantees to the value of 2 billion francs [Fr] earmarked for grain purchases by the Soviet Union.

It is known that the accord on this credit was finally reached during the recent visit to Paris by I.S. Silayev, chairman of the Interstate Economic Committee. On his departure from Paris, Silayev pointed out in an interview with your correspondent that he had to obtain the republics' guarantees for deliveries of oil and gas, primarily from Russia, in order to fulfill the financial obligations to creditors in respect of the Fr2.3 billion in credit granted for the delivery of diverse foodstuffs, for which the Soviet side had to pay in oil and gas deliveries in 1992-1994. Silayev hoped that this would be done within a week.

In the light of recent events, however, the accords reached during Silayev's visit were once again called in question. Gennadiy Burbulis, Russian first deputy prime minister, who arrived here recently, declared during a meeting with President Mitterrand that the credits agreed by Silayev to buy food for all the republics which signed the Economic Cooperation Treaty must be transferred to Russia.

This maneuver did not meet with understanding, as people here reckoned that the fulfillment of such a recommendation would make Paris adopt not an economic but a political decision in Russia's favor and to the detriment of the other republics—now sovereign states. The French Ministry of Finance declared: "Our former partners no longer exist. A paradoxical situation has emerged: We agreed to this operation in order to help the Soviet Union, but it is not clear to us now what will exist in its place."

Thus, the political maneuvering on the territory of the former USSR is leading to the deferment of credits for 100,000 tonnes of meat, 100,000 tonnes of sugar, 20,000 tonnes of dried milk powder, and 7,000 tonnes of baby food, most of which was to have gone to Moscow, so the French press writes. In this connection the newspaper LE FIGARO put the following question in an interview with G. Burbulis:

"You are creating a community, but people are hungry. How are they to be fed?"

This is what the Russian first deputy prime minister replied:

"No one has experience of leaving the totalitarian communist regime. The most urgent thing is to reestablish ownership. As of 1 January, we will cease to subsidize state and collective farms, and we will reduce spending on military sectors. It is a tremendous task, and minds are not mature."

As we see, the deputy premier did not give a specific reply to the question of how to feed the people.

Unfortunately, I have been forced to give his interview in translation from the French. The point is that his visit was very unexpected, it was simply impossible to learn of his program, and the apparatus of the press attache at the USSR Embassy, despite repeated approaches by your correspondent, obstinately fails to notify me of the presence of Soviet officials in France. So I even had to find out about the program of Gorbachev's recent visit from third persons. Or is Mr. V.I. Sukhanov, the present press attache and former official of the CPSU Central Committee apparatus, very afraid that he will be suspected of "excessive sympathies" with PRAVDA?

Supreme Soviet

Legislature on Commonwealth, Property Transfer

Property Transfer Opposed

LD1712155891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1444 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Nikolay Zheleznov]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec TASS—All deputations of the republics represented in the upper chamber of the Union parliament, except Kazakhstan, have expressed strong opposition to the resolution under preparation by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium on the transfer of the property of the USSR Supreme Soviet to Russian jurisdiction. Despite the fact that Anuarbek Alimzhanov has called on deputies to remain restrained and calm, many have addressed sharp criticism toward the Russian leadership.

"The meeting in Minsk gave us hope that there might be a diffusion of tension in our country, but in the Russian White House today this hope showed signs of waning," is the opinion of Deputy Umtul Orozova from Kyrgyzstan. She was supported by Bozorali Safarov, a representative from Tajikistan, who proposed that an appeal on an illegal decision be presented to an international court.

For the sake of fairness, it should be noted that the majority of deputies expressed approval of the constructive positions of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine, which took upon their shoulders the labor for the integration of our peoples. But the proposal for handing over the property of the Soviet of the Union, which was unexpected by many, has acutely changed their attitude toward the leadership of the Russian parliament. Several deputies saw in this a "scornful attitude" toward the "Central Asian Republics." In order to maintain sufficiently civilized relations between the future members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, they feel the leadership of the Russian parliaments should have refrained from such an act, at least until the meeting of the leaders of the states in Alma-Ata.

Russian Methods 'Clearly Unlawful'

OW1712162191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1500 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Council of the Republics of the USSR Supreme Soviet has put off till tomorrow all debates over the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the future of the national parliament. That was requested by Chairman Anuar Alimzhanov who said the Council leadership was planning to discuss the matter at a meeting with President Gorbachev at 1500 today. However, the other parliamentary chamber, the Council of the Union, voted to invite the president to attend its session at the same hour.

Earlier on Tuesday [17 December] the heads of both parliamentary houses—Konstantin Lubenchenko and Anuar Alimzhanov—were received at their request by the head of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Ruslan Khasbulatov and other leaders of the Russian parliament. They discussed the RSFSR parliament's intention to take over the national parliament's rights and property. Mr. Alimzhanov noted that, in agreeing with the decision in principle, he was dissatisfied with the time limits and methods chosen by the Russian Federation's administration which had on several occasions announced its decisions de facto.

In Mr. Lubenchenko's view, the RSFSR leadership's position boils down to the following: the conclusion of the Commonwealth agreement marks the end of the USSR Supreme Soviet as a political structure. The Russian leaders thereby resort to a clearly unlawful method—but then, all legal solutions find themselves effectively blocked at the moment, Mr. Lyubenchenko observed. According to him, the decision taken by Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine actually puts the USSR constitution out of use.

Mr. Alimzhanov supported the idea of forming a commonwealth, but only if the Central Asian republics' suggestions concerning the content, rather than the legal aspects of the agreement are taken into account. Therefore, he argued, the RSFSR leadership should not have taken any decisions on the future of the USSR Supreme Soviet until the presidents of the republics willing to join the Commonwealth met in Alma-Ata next Saturday [21 December].

According to Alimzhanov, the RSFSR administration suggests writing down the corrections and suggestions worked out in Ashkhabad by the leaders of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan into a separate protocol without changing the main text of the Commonwealth treaty. This, he observed, reduced to naught what good had been done during the Ashkhabad conference.

Mr. Alimzhanov said Presidents Gorbachev and Yeltsin were scheduled to meet later on Tuesday [17 December].

Gorbachev Resignation Discussed

OW1712184691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1700 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The meeting on Tuesday [17 December] of Soviet Peoples' Deputies proposed raising the question of the resignation of President Mikhail Gorbachev, as was said in the corresponding document, in conjunction with "the self-dismissal of the President of the USSR." The meeting, made up of deputies of the Soviet Union to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR called for the preservation of a Union parliament for the transitional period until the Commonwealth of Independent States has enacted the necessary coordinating organs.

'Fate' Debated

LD1712194591 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1700 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "New Wave" program]

[Excerpts] The USSR Supreme Soviet today examined the situation that has developed in connection with the agreement on the Commonwealth and the fate of Union structures. At the microphone is our correspondent Vera Shchelkunova:

[Shchelkunova] Generally speaking, the deputies gathered to work out their position with regard to the Brest agreement and the results of the Ashkhabad meeting of the heads of the states of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. However, the subject of the debate was made more specific following yesterday's [16 December] decision of the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet on the transfer to Russian jurisdiction of the property of the USSR Supreme Soviet. This decision was perceived as an attempt to halt the activities of the Union parliament by forceful means.

Naturally there was great interest caused by a report of the chairmen of the chambers on today's meeting with the leadership of the Russian parliament. [passage omitted]

The whole debate in the Union parliament was precisely about the fate of the Supreme Soviet, since its destiny has been identified with the future of the country as a whole. The words "coup d'etat," "we are on the threshold of authoritarianism", "people will take to the streets and sweep everything away", and so on were frequently heard. They took a long time trying to prove their point, accusing each other of blame for the disintegration of the Union.

The voices of members of the Soyuz group, those who have hardly been heard here since the August events, were heard loudest of all today. Two quotes from the speech by Deputy Kogan follow: On the Commonwealth: Either we accept it and all become traitors to our country, or we say that the coup is coming to its triumphant conclusion. On Lukyanov: His guilt was not that he took part in the events of 19 August, but that he diverted us from solving urgent problems.

Of course, there were other opinions, saying quite the opposite. Even the self-dissolution of the Supreme Soviet was proposed as the most dignified way out.

The house of the republics worked for an hour and a half today, and did not reach any decision. The meeting of the members of the Soviet of the Union, though, went on all day, and it worked out a statement which boiled down to the following: The deputies propose that parliaments and the heads of the independent states legally be guided by the decisions of the fifth Congress of USSR People's Deputies and the declaration on human rights and freedoms. It is proposed that the leadership of the Commonwealth should examine the question of the time period for the liquidation of the Union structure—I emphasize, the time period—and also return to the question of the recall of its deputies from the USSR Supreme Soviet. It is also proposed that a decision be adopted on the provisional extension of the validity of Union legislation on the territory of the Commonwealth until the adoption of their own corresponding laws by the members of the Commonwealth.

It is noteworthy that the first version of the statement contained a note to the effect that the process of achieving accord between the former republics of the USSR, which has begun, merits recognition and approval, whereas the final version completely omits any reference to the USSR Supreme Soviet's attitude to the process of creating a Commonwealth of Independent States.

Talks With Gorbachev

LD1712195891 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1730 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent Vera Shchelkunova on proceedings at the USSR Supreme Soviet session in Moscow on 17 December]

[Text] The leaders of the Council of Nationalities and heads of committees have gone to talk with Gorbachev. Functionaries from the Council of the Union also went along. Deputy Karyugin brought some information for me from this meeting.

[Begin Karyugin recording] Everything was conducted along the lines of preparations for the Alma-Ata meeting, where the arrival of heads of the 10 republics is expected. To the question of what he is busy with at the moment, the president said that on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday [14, 15, and 16 December] he was working on preparation of the document regarding approximately three aspects. The first aspect is the principles of the Commonwealth, its institutions and the legal succession. His position is that despite his somewhat skeptical attitude toward the document signed in Minsk, he nevertheless welcomes the constructive beginning of this process. I mean, the republics striving to create a Commonwealth.

His position is such: I have supported and will continue to support any process connected with integration. At the same time our president, as usual, outlined his numerous notions on each of these aspects. In my opinion—well, you know the manner in which our president expresses his thoughts—I will not repeat them here. Our deputies, including a number of chairmen of the committees, asked very precise questions connected with very precise matters, such as the attempt to form a liquidation committee in order to close the Supreme Soviet in practice, in some way—to seal its buildings, and so forth. The president said that he does not believe in this. A question connected with his departure was

asked, too. You know, my impression is that the president evaded this question and was advocating the idea of having a final, concluding session of the Supreme Soviet to decide on the questions which are outlined in our statement. They are connected with the legal succession, with the legal discontinuation of the activities of the Union bodies. This, in brief, is the essence of my information. [end recording]

Gorbachev's Position

LD1812114791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1105 GMT 18 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondents Nikolay Zheleznov and Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow, 18 Dec (TASS)—The USSR president thinks that "in the transitional period there should be a final session of the Union parliament so that the transfer of its functions to the new interstate structure of representative power can be proclaimed by civilized means". That is one of the main positions taken by Mikhail Gorbachev at a meeting with the leaders of the chambers and committees of the Union parliament.

Giving information about this today to deputies at the session of the Soviet of Republics, Anuarbek Alimzhanov, chairman of that chamber, recounted some details about the conversation with the president. Specifically, in his words, Mikhail Gorbachev set out his attitude to the situation which has taken shape in the country in a letter to the leaders of the states planning to take part in the meeting in Alma-Ata this week. The letter stresses the need to retain continuity in the formation of the new form of statehood but notes that it must be done by legal and constitutional means.

Mikhail Gorbachev's letter contains a proposal for the text of an "agreement of the three" and documents for the Ashkhabad meeting.

Deputies Release Statement

LD1712215291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1950 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS)—Today, a statement by USSR people's deputies was circulated, in which it says:

In connection with the signing by the presidents of the RSFSR and the Ukraine and the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Belarus of the agreement on the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, envisaging the dissolution of the USSR, an end to USSR laws being in force, the abolition of its bodies, and the ratification of this document by the supreme soviets of these states;

Taking into account the process outlined for joining the agreement by sovereign states and members of the USSR, as well as the decisions by some of them recalling their deputations from the USSR Supreme Soviet;

And guided by the right of the representatives of authority who have been elected by the entire people—which is guaranteed by the law "On the Status of a USSR People's Deputy" as well as by Articles 1 and 6 of the law "On the Bodies of State Power and Administration of the USSR in the Transitional Period" which was adopted, in accordance with the statement by the heads of the republics, on 5 September 1991 by the fifth extraordinary USSR Congress of People's Deputies;

We state that:

We share the general alarm in connection with the unsatisfactory economic and political situation in the republics; reaffirm the need for the urgent implementation of reforms; and express the hope that the provision of acceptable living conditions, civil freedoms, and the security of people is truly the main task of parliamentarians and heads and governments of the independent states, who accept full responsibility for the present and the future of all the peoples on the territory of the USSR;

We recognize and give warning that the process of achieving accord, which is directed toward the peaceful joint coexistence of the peoples, is possible only under conditions whereby the provision of law-based and governmental activity of society at interstate and international levels can continue to be maintained.

We propose:

One. That the parliaments and heads of the independent states be guided by the decisions of the fifth extraordinary USSR Congress of People's Deputies and the declaration of human rights and freedoms as a legal basis in the creation of the Commonwealth.

Two. In connection with the lack in the Commonwealth that is taking shape of interstate coordinating bodies which are ready to function; because there is a danger of losing the vestiges of control, owing to hastily adopted decisions on the premature elimination of the state bodies of power and government; and as we find that these decisions are illegitimate, and do not correspond to the situation that has come into being, nor to the vital interests of the peoples;

—that, in order to guarantee continuity in the actions of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the coordinating structures of the Commonwealth, and to guarantee that the Union parliament continues to function, the decisions to recall delegations from the Soviet of the Republics and USSR people's deputies from the Soviet of the Union be reconsidered, and that the status of people's deputies from the Republic of Belarus be restored.

Three. That a decision be made to temporarily reinstate the functioning of all-Union legislation in the areas it covers on the territories of the independent states, until such time as they adopt their own laws, and in the event that this legislation is not at variance with the constitutions of the members of the Commonwealth.

All responsibility for the uncontrolled development of events and likely complications of both the situation within the country and the international situation during the process of creating the Commonwealth of Independent States lies with the heads of states and the parliaments of the Commonwealth members.

In the event of further complication of the situation in the country, the USSR people's deputies reserve the right to convene a USSR Congress of People's Deputies in the future.

Right To Call Congress Reserved

OW1812014991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Over 150 peoples' deputies of the USSR, meeting on Tuesday [17 December] in the Kremlin, stated that in case the situation in the country becomes increasingly difficult, they reserve the right to call an extraordinary Congress of Union Peoples' Deputies in the future.

An "IF" [INTERFAX] correspondent reports that in a statement passed at the meeting the deputies underlined the reality "of having lost the remains of government due to the rapid adoption of decisions on premature liquidation of all-state authorities and governing bodies."

According to the participants at the meeting, it is necessary to return to the question on the judgement of republican deputies from the Soviet of the Republics and the disbandment of the Soviet of the Union in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. The Union deputies feel that it is essential that the current union legislation continue to be active until the former Union republics have passed their own laws, "if this does not contradict the constitution of the state-members of the Commonwealth of Independent States."

In the declarations passed at the meeting, a point on whether or not Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev should resign due to his own removal from deciding the problems of national and state organization, was removed from the text.

The next meeting of the peoples' deputies of the USSR is planned for next Tuesday, December 24th.

Lubenchenko Briefs Union Council

LD1712171791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1445 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS)—The Union parliament should continue to discharge its duties until the power structures of the Commonwealth of Independent States are in place—USSR people's deputies taking part in a meeting in the Kremlin today insist on this. This form of working for deputies was chosen because following the recall of Russia's deputies it has been impossible to assemble a quorum. The chairman of the chamber, Konstantin Lubenchenko, briefed deputies on his meeting with the leadership of Russia's Supreme Soviet and set out his stance vis-a-vis the Union parliament. He noted that in the view of the Russian parliament, the USSR Supreme Soviet no longer exists, and that there are three factors for this: The agreement among three republics to set up the Commonwealth of Independent States, the willingness expressed by five other republics to be cofounders of the commonwealth, and also the recall of RSFSR deputies from the Soviet of the Union. In the opinion of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, this is quite enough for the Union parliament to depart the political scene.

Not one of the members of parliament taking part in the meeting agreed with this view. Deputies stressed that if the fate of the USSR Supreme Soviet is indeed sealed, then it should be disbanded in a civilized manner. Parliament should continue to work until coordinating bodies for the Commonwealth of Independent States are created—this was the common view of members of parliament.

In the morning, deputies adopted as a basis the draft of a statement stressing that, while supporting the aspiration of sovereign republics to create a Commonwealth of Independent States, they at the same time declare the need to resolve issues concerning succession in law as this relates to the USSR—and within this, as it relates to its status as a subject of international law—and also concerning the juridical basis, procedure, and timescales for the powers of representative union and interrepublican bodies of the USSR to be transferred to the bodies of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Soviet of Republics' Statement

LD1812122191 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1100 GMt 18 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent Ludmila Semina from the USSR Supreme Soviet in Moscow]

[Text] The Union parliament has ended its work until the Alma-Ata meeting of the heads of the independent states, that is, until 21 December. Today, the Soviet of Republics adopted a statement. Hope was expressed at the meeting that Mayak will immediately inform the whole country about the statement adopted. I quote this document:

The Soviet of Republics notes with understanding the agreement of the republics of Belarus, RSFSR and Ukraine on creating a Commonwealth of Independent States and regards it as a real guarantee for getting out of the most acute political and economic crisis.

The Soviet of Republics assesses as an important and constructive step the meeting of the heads of the republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenia and Uzbekistan in the city of Ashkhabad at which a

statement was made on the positive nature of the Minsk initiative, and the desire was expressed to coordinate efforts to form the Commonwealth on the basis of its participants having equal rights.

The Soviet of Republics expresses the hope for the energetic continuation, with the personal involvement of the heads of states, of the formation process that began with the agreement in question, and the strengthening of the Commonwealth of the Independent States in the interests of their peoples and the guranteeing of human rights. The Soviet of Republics considers that the transition from Union statehood to the Commonwealth of Independent States, and of legal succession in the activity of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the coordination of the institutions of the Commonwealth should be implemented only on a legal basis. Anticonstitutional activities with regard to the Supreme Soviet and the USSR president are impermissible.

Political & Social

Abolishment of Union Considered, Evaluated

Transition Period Until Mid-Jan

LD1712151391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1440 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS)—Until official constitutional decisions to set up a new state of interstate formation have been adopted, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics continues to exist. The USSR cannot be abolished by the "stroke of a pen". This was stated at a briefing today by Andrey Grachev, an aide to the USSR president and the head of his press service.

Describing the current situation in the country, he noted that a period of transition was now in progress. During it, state, power and other structures will change. Andrey Grachev termed the forthcoming meeting of the heads of sovereign states, scheduled to take place in Alma-Ata on 21 December, an important step in this period. Once the Commonwealth of Independent States agreement has been signed, the process of the Commonwealth coming into being will acquire a new level. In his view, the next stage—the approval of the treaty by relevant parliaments—will also be necessary. It will, after that, be possible to say that one state is, in historical terms, being replaced by another. It is his view that the period of transition will last till mid-January 1992.

Replying to journalists' questions concerning the speculation that Mikhail Gorbachev might resign, Andrey Grachev noted that the USSR president's position on this issue has not changed.

Grachev: 'Three Key Tasks'

LD1712170391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1529 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Andrey Pershin and Viktor Runov]

[Text] Moscow, 17 December (TASS)—An important task for the president of the USSR during the coming period is to use all his opportunities and influence to avoid confrontation in politics and interethnic matters and to direct the actions of the various political forces and representatives of the sovereign states toward the consolidation of society, even though those structures, which have functioned for decades and have united the USSR into an integral whole, are being dismantled. This is how Andrey Grachev, the leader of his press service, described one of the three key tasks facing the president of the USSR during the current transition period at a briefing in Moscow today.

Mikhail Gorbachev also will insure that the processes of the state's and the country's transition from one form to another occur within constitutional and democratic frameworks. Moreover, the president will strive to guarantee that "no threat to stability either inside or outside the Soviet Union should be created," and to insure the continuity of the USSR 's international obligations, including the issue of its place in the Security Council, its participation in the Helsinki process, and strict control over the possible use of its strategic and nuclear potential.

Gorbachev Might Go to Alma-Ata

LD1712171391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1452 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Pershin]

[Text] Moscow, 17 December (TASS)—"I do not think that anything would prevent Mikhail Gorbachev from going to Alma-Ata, except for one thing—the participants in this meeting must determine what its nature, and accordingly, what its composition is." This was stated at a briefing in Moscow today by Andrey Grachev, leader of the press service of the president of the USSR, who was answering a question on the possibility of Mikhail Gorbachev's participation in a meeting of the leaders of the sovereign states planned for 21 December in the capital of Kazakhstan, where the formation of a Commonwealth of Independent States is to be discussed. As is known, invitations have been sent to all 12 heads of the republics of the former Union.

Andrey Grachev explained that "if it is a matter of a meeting on the level of leaders of the republics, then Mikhail Sergeyevich, not being one of them, is not planning to take part in it." "If it is a matter of a session which is—by form or essence or inertia—to be of the nature of a sitting of a council of state," the president's press secretary continued, "he may take part in it."

In any case, Grachev indicated, "Mikhail Gorbachev is counting on being represented at Alma-Ata, if only by means of his proposals and ideas which he will send to the participants in this meeting." These proposals, it was stressed at the briefing, will concern not only issues of defense and the structures for monitoring the command and utilization of the military potential, but also other spheres of activity of the future commonwealth.

Question of Inheritance Addressed

OW1712181991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1700 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin held a meeting in the Kremlin behind closed doors this afternoon.

Before the meeting at a conference with the leaders of both houses of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the parliamentary committee of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Mikhail Gorbachev said that he and Yeltsin would discuss the preparations for the meeting of the heads of the sovereign republics in Alma-Ata. The Soviet president has not yet been officially invited to the meeting.

Speaking on the discussion Gorbachev had with the members of parliament, Nikolay Koryugin, chairman of the committee on regulations for the Soviet of the Union, stated that despite the president's slightly skeptical feelings about the Commonwealth of Independent States, he welcomes a constructive beginning of the process and supports any processes tied to integration. Gorbachev announced that documents on the principles and institutions of the Commonwealth are being prepared, and that the question of inheritance was being addressed.

With regard to the fate of the Union parliament, Gorbachev spoke in favor of holding a final session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to respect the legal conclusion of activities of union organs of state power. The president, according to Koryugin, did not answer questions on his position regarding calling an extraordinary Congress of Peoples Deputies of the USSR.

'To Rise Above' Own Views

LD1712184991 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] According to an INTERFAX report that we just received, Mikhail Gorbachev is meeting Boris Yeltsin behind closed doors in the Kremlin now. The country's situation is being discussed in light of the decision on setting up the Commonwealth of Independent States, initiated by Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. Earlier in the evening, Mikhail Gorbachev received leaders of the ARD German television and radio company. He said, inter alia, that at today's meeting with Yeltsin the issues bearing upon the Russian president's trip to Italy and preparations for the Alma-Ata meeting of leaders of 10 sovereign states, scheduled for 21 December, would be touched upon.

Gorbachev told the German visitors that he intends to try in every possible way to ensure that the transitional period from the USSR to the Commonwealth should be completed as soon as possible. To promote this, the USSR president, in his words, is ready to rise above his own views to which, however, he remains faithful.

Gorbachev, Yeltsin Meet

LD1712190291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1815 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS)—USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin met for about two hours today and touched upon yesterday's Soviet-U.S. talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

The conversation focused on the forthcoming meeting of heads of sovereign states in Alma-Ata, during which it is intended to discuss issues, and discuss and sign documents on forming structures of the future Commonwealth of Independent States.

Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin considered in detail various aspects of the issue that will be discussed at these talks, and agreed that the transition period from Union structures to the forthcoming bodies of the future Commonwealth of Independent States should be implemented within the framework of constitutional norms, taking into account international obligations of the Soviet Union. The USSR president announced that he intends to send to the participants in the Alma-Ata meeting detailed opinions on the main issues to be discussed there. An intention was also expressed to complete, on the whole, the transition period to the new structures of the future Commonwealth during the second half of December and beginning of January. The conversation, in the opinion of the USSR president, was of a constructive and positive nature. This was reported by the USSR president's press service.

Flag To Be Lowered 31 Dec

OW1712210691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Soviet Union will cease to exist before the end of the year, Mr. Pavel Voshchanov, Boris Yeltsin's press secretary, told IF [INTERFAX] commenting on the 2-hours' talks on Tuesday [17 December] between Boris Yeltsin and Mikhail Gorbachev. Mr. Voshchanov said that during their confidential meeting the two leaders discussed the future of the Union bodies. The main conclusion was that the Union bodies would terminate their work this year.

Obviously, the USSR's national flag will be lowered above the Kremlin on the New Year's eve, said Mr. Voshchanov, while the Kremlin and all of its offices will be put under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation. The same will happen to the USSR Gosbank (State Bank).

The two leaders also discussed the subject of the forthcoming talks in Alma-Ata. Mr. Voshchanov said that the independent republics intended to conclude a treaty on the defence union of the Commonwealth and added that USSR Defence Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov was expected to participate.

The two presidents exchanged views on their talks with US Secretary of State, James Baker.

Shevarnadze Interviewed on Reform, Accords

AU1712213791 Prague LIDOVE NOVINY in Czech 16 Dec 91 p 1

[Interview with Eduard Shevardnadze, USSR Minister for External Relations, by Jaromir Stetina in Moscow during a pause at the constituent congress of the Movement for Democratic Reforms; date not given: "Danger Under Control"]

[Text] [Stetina] Aleksandr Yakovlev brought up the idea of a compromise between the Belovezh and the Novo-Ogarevo processes. Is such a compromise at all possible?

[Shevarnadze] It is an interesting idea, but its realization is not that simple. It requires a sober approach on all sides.

[Stetina] Do you consider the Belovezhskaya Pushcha accord to be a step in the right direction?

[Shevarnadze] Definitely. It is a breakthrough in the sense that the Ukraine and virtually all the republics will take part in the process.

[Stetina] Just a few days ago, you were rather pessimistic regarding the signing of the Belovezh accord. Has something changed in your attitude toward this problem?

[Shevarnadze] My attitude was not that pessimistic.... I was talking about some unfinished business....

[Stetina] How would you assess the Ashkhabad statement issued by the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan on their readiness to join the Commonwealth of Independent States?

[Shevarnadze] I believe it has great significance. It was serious, well considered, and right in principle. A lot will be further clarified in the preparatory process; I am convinced that many elements will have to be adjusted, after all, each republic may contribute its amendments....

Shevardnadze To Replace Kozyrev Rumor Denied

OW1812132191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1209 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A source close to the USSR Foreign Minister has categorically denied rumours that Eduard Shevardnadze may replace Andrey Kozyrev as Russia's Foreign Minister. The RSFSR Foreign Ministry regards the suggestion as absolutely groundless.

Overview of Democratic Movement Activities

Travkin Criticized

PM1712150991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 3

[Report by Major S. Knyazkov under "Direct Line" rubric: "MDR Favors Seven 'D's' and Commonwealth of Independent States, but G. Popov Resigns"]

[Text] The Movement for Democratic Reforms [MDR] was born roughly a year ago and for many people is associated with the names of such well-known cofounders as E. Shevardnadze, A. Yakovlev, A. Rutskoy, A. Sobchak, G. Popov. S. Shatalin, A. Volskiy, and others. They also played the main roles at the constituent congress held 14 and 15 December in Moscow's Rossiya State Concert Hall.

On the first day of the congress the report by A. Yakovlev, who spoke in particular about the drama facing democratic forces inasmuch as they may inwardly degenerate with the emergence of neo-authoritarianism, stuck in my mind. It is from these standpoints that I think we should regard the conflict at the congress between two different trends in the contemporary democratic movement.

I am referring to the sharp criticism of N. Travkin, chairman of the Democratic Party of Russia [DPR], by Shatalin, chairman of the DPR Consultative Council, and Travkin's deputy A. Terekhov. They accused the DPR chairman of great-power chauvinism. Terekhov stressed that the protest rally over the Belovezhskaya agreements organized by Travkin put the party on a par with V. Zhirinovskiy, S. Baburin, and N. Andreyeva. He added that the democratic party "is gradually becoming a party of 'brownshirts.'"

There was no unanimity in the hall on other questions either. Yakovlev's proposed compromise between the Belovezhskaya agreements and the Novo-Ogarevo Union Treaty met neither understanding nor support.

The congress participants also opposed the opposition (however you describe it: constructive or otherwise) to the incumbent Russian leadership, for which Popov pressed in his statement. Incidentally, in a second statement he spoke of his resignation as mayor of Moscow. At the same time Yakovlev's proposed program for revival based on the seven "D's" was greeted with approval:

deparasitization (delumpenization), denationalization, deindustrialization, demilitarization, decollectivization, demonopolization, and deanarchization.

It follows from the MDR programmatic statement that it is primarily geared to the emergent market sectors of the economy and wants to express the interests of the employers, the social base of which comprises owners: entrepreneurs, workers, private farmers, managers, and the scientific-technical and creative intelligentsia. Incidentally, it is with the enterprise culture that the MDR associates the resolution of the problem of "forming an effective professional army."

Congress Assessed

PM1812093091 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Article by G. Ivanov-Smolenskiy: "Movement for Democratic Reforms: Neither a Position, Nor an Opposition"]

[Text] The founding congress of the Movement for Democratic Reforms [MDR] took place in the Rossiya movie and concert hall on 14 and 15 December. Taking part were 1,143 delegates and 370 observers from all the sovereign states and republics of the former Union. Sixty-two MDR regional centers, 26 parties, 23 movements and social organizations, and six trade unions were represented at the congress—a broad political spectrum of democratic forces. The congress adopted a program statement and statutes and elected a board and cochairmen. At the end of the second day the MDR Russian Section was also formed.

At the congress the present time was unanimously characterized as critical—economically, politically, socially, and legally. The delegates and observers were no less unanimous as regards the majority of the MDR's priorities. In the economy, this means orientation primarily toward the emergent market structures, efforts to express entrepreneurs' interests, the rejection of the lumpen mentality, and support for the desire to grow "rich through labor." And consequently the mechanism is privatization, demonopolization, decollectivization, and demilitarization of the economy. The market is like a dentist, the only one capable of delivering society from toothache.

In the political sphere, after some vacillations on the first day the congress supported the Commonwealth of Independent States, while stressing that the breaking of established ties would be fatal to reforms in all the Commonwealth's components. The congress was also worried about the possible disintegration of the Armed Forces, and particularly highlighted the need to widen the unified democratic and legal area.

The democrats' view in the human rights sphere was outlined in principle. Here are the main theses, as set forth by Anatoliy Sobchak. Democratic power in the broad sense does not yet exist—power exists only as an anticommunist opposition. In some republics it has risen to the helm riding on a wave of pure nationalism, and in others—populism. The reasons for the growing infringements of human rights lie in the strengthening of executive power while democratic forces and institutions lag behind; the disintegration of the Union, the termination of many Union laws, and hence the legal vacuum; the redistribution of power from the "central" center to republic centers; and the artificiality and arbitrariness of borders, leading to the oppression of "foreigners" (dismissals from work on ethnic grounds, judicial persecution, open violence—the exodus of the intelligentsia, refugees, and so forth). In these conditions the MDR, the congress believes, could succeed provided it becomes not only a political movement, but a mass organization for the defense of human rights and the rule-of-law state.

There was, I repeat, a wise consensus on everything listed above. There were differences when the delegates set about defining their attitude to the present authorities and its reforms, that is to say, basically their own real participation in all the above-named spheres of life. After noting the need for a renewal of the soviets, clarification of their functions, and reform of representative power, as well as the creation of a new and temporary "administrative edict system" which would dismantle state ownership, the congress found itself face to face with supreme and highest power. And here the disputes and proposals swung back and forth over a very wide sweep. From a bloc of parties in support of the Russian Government to strategic support for it and criticism on tactical questions, all the way to constructive opposition. And Gavriil Popov stressed that there is something to go into opposition about, something to criticize. Such as the prevalence of price liberalization over privatization, the interpretation of the latter, the "land nonreform," the tax system, and much else besides. The mayor himself repeated several times that he is inclined toward opposition. But the majority of delegates "on the floor" resolutely opposed this stance. The Communist Party has been banned, but its people and its revamped structures remain, and for the most part the authorities are still not democratic, but police-state authorities; it is a mistake to think that the Russian team has won, it is falling apart bloodily—those were their reasons.

Let us correlate this far from postcommunist situation "on the ground" with the inevitability of reforms and their controversial nature. If we correlate these things, we can identify the political space currently available to the MDR for maneuvering. This is a frankly awkward and very narrow space—between support for the authorities in their reformist efforts, and attempts to distance itself from them, even going as far as opposition.

To give the congress its due, it found a very clear and precise formulation to describe its position: constructive support for the democratic power—continued criticism of inconsistent moves—opposition to those authorities that are reviving totalitarianism. Thus the MDR sees itself as a kind of mighty "political buffer" between the possible collapse of reforms (with all the ensuing social

consequences) and the unpredictable growth of influence on the masses, in that event, by those who are already promising to "call everyone to account" and "solve all the problems within 72 hours." [Reference to Zhirinovskiy and the Liberal Democratic Party] In other words, it sees itself as the third force that can insure society against the possible tragic outcome of the Weimar Republic, which was mentioned repeatedly at the congress.

Well, that is a reasonable and farsighted position. True, at the congress things went no further than noting the need to "devise mechanisms for wide implementation in practice." As for how it goes in future, only time will tell.

The MDR Congress elected a board and cochairmen highly democratically, without the noisy wrangling we are used to. Those elected were familiar and respected individuals—A. Volskiy, G. Popov, A. Sobchak, E. Shevardnadze, V. Shostakovskiy, S. Shatalin, and A. Yakovlev. It is, however, striking that among the "leadership" there are no young politicians, none of those who have a better and closer knowledge of their own contemporaries and who gave a practical demonstration of their commitment to democracy in August.

Kazakh Delegates Speak Out

LD1712211291 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1645 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Kazakh delegates to the founding congress of the Democratic Reform Movement spoke out against a revision of the borders between Russia and its neighbors.

The founding congress of the movement was attended by leaders of the Kazakh Civil Movement AZAT, the Kazakh Republican Party and the People's Congress of Kazakhstan Party. They addressed the Presidium of the founding congress and members of its Political Council Eduard Shevardnadze and Aleksandr Yakovlev with a statement "strongly opposing the view being spread by popular public and political figures that Russia may revise its borders with neighboring states". The authors of the resolution hold the view that "the Democratic Reform Movement should be an intergovernmental one and guarantee the stability of inter-ethnic relations, peace and accord on the basis of unchangeable borders between independent states".

Union of Communists: Everything But Members

PM1712152591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Report by Galina Mashtakova under the "In Parties and Movements" rubric: "Tell Me Who Your Friend Is..."]

[Text] Such an important statement was made by members of the organizing committee for a party which is newly being created—the "Union of Communists"—at a recent news conference in the House of Journalists. They ardently appealed to their colleagues in the mushrooming communist parties not to admit the country's president as a member. Only quite recently CPSU members were very proud of their cohesive ranks and equally unified convictions. In "underground" conditions it has become obvious that there is no concord in their camp either. Yet how they mocked the democrats! But now... The latest Communist Party—according to the most modest estimates, the sixth—is being born with no particular pangs.

The "Union of Communists"—this is what supporters of the Marxist platform in the now nonexistent CPSU have decided to call their future party. Everything in the new party is as in the present one: organizing committee, statements, appeals, protests, ideological concepts. The only thing missing is members. But these are in prospect! The organizing committee has calculated everything exactly according to sociological research: The spring indicators announce that 15-17 percent of CPSU members adhere to Marxist positions, while 40 percent support the line of the CPSU Central Committee. Here is your potential reserve. This evidently gives the organizing committee members the right to maintain that the "Union of Communists" party is being created under pressure from below. Who is "pressing" and how many there are of them—the committed Marxists found it hard to answer that.

On the other hand, they defined their functions without hesitation: The party is to become the intellectual leader of the epoch. Well, it has already been its conscience, its honor too...

But precisely this is dubious—the new ideologues of communism are very resolute. Their aim is to avert the threat of capitalism, to struggle to the end against the social stratification of society, to reinstate the USSR (including the stray Baltic region), and to restore the communists' power. This is the maximum program. And the minimum program is to get their share of the CPSU's legacy.

To get the full picture, it only remains to add that the party coffers of the "Union of Communists" today contain 3,724 rubles.

But for now... A familiar face suddenly appeared on the television screen Sunday. There can be no mistake: Lieutenant Colonel S. Terekhov, member of the organizing committee of the "Union of Communists" and a student at the V.I. Lenin Military Political Academy, was standing shoulder to shoulder with Zhirinovskiy at the rally. Tell me who your friend is...

Economic Meeting Postponed 'Indefinitely'

LD1812120191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1055 GMT 18 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Test] Moscow, 18 Dec (TASS)— A session of the Council of the Heads of Governments of the Economic

Community member states, due to take place today, has been indefinitely postponed. The main reason is uncertainty about the political situation on the eve of the meeting, expected to be held in Alma-Ata on Saturday, 21 December, between the leaders of the three Slavic and five Muslim republics of the former USSR. The Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] may, as a result of the meeting, acquire more members.

A TASS correspondent has learned from reliable sources that it was originally planned that the 18-19 December session of the Council of Heads of Governments would continue work on supplementary agreements to the Economic Community Treaty, which has been signed by Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, Moldova and Ukraine. So far, the heads of governments only managed to get through five supplementary agreements to the treaty. Without these agreements, of which there are more than 20, the treaty cannot be submitted for ratification by the parliaments of the Economic Community member states.

Numerous experts are of the view that following the "Belovezhskaya troyka" accords, the treaty may never see the light of day at all, since, due to the changed political situation, the republican parliaments may well reject ratification of it in the form in which it was signed exactly two months ago, on 18 October.

The prospects for setting up a single economic space on the former Union territory will remain unclear until the Alma-Ata meeting on 21 December. Will new economic documents be signed there by the sovereign republics, or will the treaty that already exists be adopted as the basis for the formation of a single economic space? For the time being, it is not known along which of these two paths the Commonwealth will begin to set up the single economic space.

Workers Plan 'March of Hungry Queues' 21 Dec

LD1712172491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1600 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] The United Front of the Working People and the Working People's Moscow Movement intend to hold the March of the Hungry Queues on 21 December. It is expected that nearly 10,000 people will participate in the procession.

'Crisis of Interrepublic Relations' Seen

PM1712163991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Commentary by I. Demchenko: "Time Has Come for a Policy of Compromise"]

[Text] Ultimately, it is practice which is the criterion for truth, even if it seems to some to be the other way around. The bitter arguments between advocates of a separate or joint way out of the crisis have ended in complete victory for the latter. The alliance of states has formed on a fundamentally new basis, but actual integration has become a logical link in the chain of recent events.

As soon as matters progressed to practical actions, the need, inevitability, and advantages of an alliance of former republics were immediately confirmed. The speed with which the three republic leaders reached agreement, the near unanimous enthusiasm of their strong-willed parliaments, the respectful understanding shown by the heads of the remaining republics, and the support from the West also attest to this. Once again the crisis of interrepublic relations—which it is no exaggeration to call the most dangerous of the whole series of crises experienced by us in recent times—did not end in tragedy, and once again this massive country with no name breathed a sigh of relief, although there is still a long way to go before there can be total peace of mind.

We will probably never know from official sources whether Russia was in fact seriously intending to implement reform unilaterally and without waiting for the other republics, or whether statements on this score were an original political ploy. At any rate, the composition of the Russian Government's current economic team gives no grounds to suspect that it lacks professional skill and an understanding of elementary matters. Clearly, therefore, the declaration about starting to implement individual republic reform on a specific part of the common economic area—which caused so much concern among many politicians and economists—had to be taken lightly from the outset: This would never be done simply because it is impossible.

This early reaction is not even a reaction to concrete acts by the reformers but merely to their statements: pumping rubles into Krasnodar Kray and certain other regions of Russia; completely clearing out the remnants of goods from the state trade sector; price hikes in commercial trade and a drop in demand in this sector; the fall of the ruble exchange rate at hard currency auctions, and so on—all of this is graphic proof, should anybody need it, that efforts to conduct reform in just one independent republic, even the largest republic, are bound to fail. So to some extent the signing of an agreement with other republics cannot be considered coincidental. The conclusion of some form of economic-political union is an objective condition for the transition to the market, and no other variants exist. Actually, there is another variant—economic war between the republics—but this would be suicide.

The economic agreements reached in Belarus broach fundamental questions: preserving a single monetary unit; coordinating policy to control the state budget deficit; containing an increase in the monetary mass; and conducting a unified taxation policy and simultaneous

price release. By signing a joint declaration on economic questions the republic leaders have shown a rational willingness to compromise: Russia yielded on the question of a deadline for beginning price liberalization, and Ukraine gave way on the deadline for introducing its own currency.

Now all the agreements which have been reached require further consolidation, and this will be dealt with by specialists and the government members of those states which have entered the commonwealth. The chief dangers stalking the sides on this road are as follows: First, if they were to betray the expectations of their partners and exceed the bounds of the agreements reached; and second, if they were to get bogged down yet again in the written accords or wallow in petty squabbles, ambitious claims, and efforts to gain something through deceit or cunning. If the flexibility shown by the leaders in Belarus fails to emerge at this level too, then the reform question can be considered resolved already—the fate of the Treaty on an Economic Community awaits it.

Under a completely just approach based on the absolute equality of the independent states within the Commonwealth—its founders as well as those who join later—it could turn out, for example, that the Russian proposals on economic reform prove to be better conceived and better prepared. This is not because they derive from somebody's "big brother" trying to foist his own approach on others, but simply because Russia began dealing with these questions earlier than the others and its government's idea is obviously more highly defined. This cannot cause offense or suspicion if the situation is evaluated without prejudice. The time has come for a policy of compromise in interrepublic relations, and the sooner we adopt such a policy the better our lives will be.

It merely remains for us to hope that all sides have sufficient delicacy and a great enough sense of responsibility to coordinate their actions as soon as possible. For, in fact, time has already run out. If we do not initiate reform very soon, we may never manage to do so.

Commonwealth Affairs

Accords, Gorbachev Role, Future Viewed

Yeltsin Interview

PM1712204191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Partial reprint of an interview with Russian President Boris Yeltsin by an unidentified LA REPUBBLICA correspondent in the Russian Government building in Staraya Square, date not given; interview carried in 17 December issue of LA REPUBBLICA: "Boris Yeltsin: The USSR President Has Until Mid-January at the Latest"—first paragraph is IZVESTIYA introduction]

[Text] Everyone remembers the article about Yeltsin published in 1989 in the leading Italian newspaper LA REPUBBLICA and reprinted in PRAVDA. How many disputes and how much bewilderment and indignation it evoked then. Few recognized the man on whose name the people pinned all their hopes for change in the unflattering portrait drawn by the newspaper's New York correspondent. But now, two and a half years later, all the indications are that Yeltsin has replaced anger with favor. LA REPUBBLICA has published an interview with him which is just as sensational as the piece that made the newspaper known to almost every inhabitant of Russia. We are partially reprinting this interview today.

No place is envisaged for Mikhail Gorbachev in the new Commonwealth of Independent States, and the president of the Soviet Union has "until the end of December, or mid-January at the latest" to decide to resign. Impassively, without raising his voice, Boris Yeltsin pronounced this peculiar verdict exiling the creator of perestroyka, asserting that "nine republics, and maybe 10," will sign the agreement on the new Commonwealth on 21 December, thereby sanctioning the demise of the USSR. After Yeltsin, as "master of the house," received James Baker in the luxury of the Kremlin, which for centuries formed the czars' residence and for the past 70 years has been the bastion of Soviet power, he returned to the former CPSU Central Committee building in Staraya Square, where the Russian Government works today. He talked to Defense Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov for an hour there, and there too, in the vast office that only four months ago belonged to the general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Yeltsin gave an exclusive interview to LA REPUBBLICA on the eve of his official visit to Italy, which begins in the next few days.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Boris Nikolayevich, can we already say that the Commonwealth of Independent States exists and the Soviet Union is no more?

[Yeltsin] The Commonwealth does undoubtedly exist, given that Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus have signed the agreement on its foundation. We have to wait at least two weeks—until the last Union structures are transferred to Russian jurisdiction—before we can state that the USSR is no more. Nevertheless, our three republics have denounced the Union Treaty of 1922 and recalled their deputies from the Union parliament, which in practice means the former Soviet power is no more. Three days ago I spoke to Gorbachev about the time it will take to complete the transitional period, and I told him that this process must be finished in December, or mid-January at the latest.

[LA REPUBBLICA] In your opinion, might Ukraine withdraw from the Commonwealth if in the final analysis it resembles Gorbachev's plan for a new Union? Galina Starovoytova, one of your advisers, has expressed such a fear.

[Yeltsin] The Commonwealth in no way resembles the Union that Gorbachev wanted, that is, a Union as a

separate state with a strong central government. And there is no danger that Ukraine will withdraw. Starovoytova can have her own opinion. Kravchuk and I talk practically every day and we are both expecting that Kazakhstan, together with the four other Central Asian republics and Armenia, will join Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus in signing the agreement on the Commonwealth 21 December in Alma-Ata. It is not out of the question that Moldova will also sign the agreement.

[LA REPUBBLICA] How did the idea of the Commonwealth arise?

[Yeltsin] It was mentioned for the first time in December of last year, when the central government was torpedoing reforms. At that time Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan sent representatives to Minsk to discuss the possibility of forming a Commonwealth. Gorbachev blocked this plan, but the documents were kept and we analyzed them again in Minsk 8 December. That is why we managed to reach accord in just over a day.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Will the Commonwealth have its own flag?

[Yeltsin] We will not have the red flag any more. We have yet to discuss the problem of the future Commonwealth structures, but, given that we will not be a single state, I do not think that the Commonwealth will have its own flag. And then, as I already told Baker today, in the future the United States will not have just one interlocutor; every state in the Commonwealth will have both its own representative in the United Nations, and also diplomatic and other relations with other states.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Who will head the Commonwealth's Defense Council?

[Yeltsin] It will be a military man who will be appointed by the Commonwealth states. As for the post of "president," such a thing is not envisaged in the Commonwealth.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Who will have the "nuclear briefcase" containing the codes?

[Yeltsin] Not Gorbachev.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Will the stores now be full of food after the formation of the Commonwealth? Are you worried about unrest and mass action or another putsch—of which there is a great deal of talk now—as a result of hunger and the economic crisis?

[Yeltsin] The formation of the Commonwealth does not mean that we will automatically resolve the food problem. Everything is connected with economic reforms, which have been hindered in all kinds of ways. Following the price liberalization, the situation will deteriorate for six months. And we are certainly worried about the problem of unrest and even rebellions. We know from the experience of certain countries (Argentina, Brazil) which tried to start reforms, that they were forced to retreat because of popular protests. We will try to explain to our people that this is a question of temporary sacrifices and that the situation will stabilize in a year's time and better times will come. The people must have faith despite the fact that six years of perestroyka did not bring a rise in the living standard and the situation even deteriorated. But I do not believe that there will be another putsch. All talk of this is inspired by fear of reforms and of the Russian leadership.

'Last Chance To Save Nation'

LD1712181391 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1700 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] The president of Russia, Boris Yeltsin, has described the Commonwealth of Independent States as the last chance to save the nation. He said the Commonwealth had to be cherished—confrontation of any kind could prove fatal. President Yeltsin pointed out that the development of the community would halt the disintegration.

He was speaking before a general meeting of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The president said the Russian Government would continue to give priority to, and to finance, science. If we are to cope with the crisis, said President Yeltsin, we need scientists and top [word indistinct] specialists.

Alma-Ata Agenda Revealed

LD1712225291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2200 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] During his meeting with USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev, Russian President Boris Yeltsin discussed questions concerning the coming cessation of activity of the structures of the USSR. They also examined various aspects of the coming Alma-Ata conference on 21 December of leaders of states which have established the Commonwealth of Independent States and of those intending to join it.

Yeltsin himself told a correspondent of the RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY that it is planned to sign in Alma-Ata an agreement on the Commonwealth with the maximum possible number of states. A treaty on a defense alliance of member states of the Commonwealth will also be signed. The question of the supreme command of the united strategic armed forces and of the commander in chief will also be decided.

Yeltsin said no center is envisaged in the Commonwealth. It was planned to set up in the Commonwealth a council of heads of states. The process of liquidation of Union structures is planned to be mainly completed this month, in order to start living from the beginning of January in a qualitatively new condition without the former Union.

Burbulis Interview

PM1712153091 Paris LE FIGARO in French 14-15 Dec 91 p 2

[Interview with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Gennadiy Burbulis by Jacques Jacquet-Francillon and Laure Mandeville in Paris; date not given]

[Text] [LE FIGARO] What do you think of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] formed in Minsk?

[Burbulis] I think that in 62 hours, we managed to find an original, elegant, and historic solution to the uncertainties hanging over the future of our reforms.

The fact that the European Political Union and the CIS are emerging at the same time in Europe is a very encouraging sign.

[LE FIGARO] If the Soviet Union no longer exists, that raises the question of the international representation of the states which signed the Minsk agreement.

[Burbulis] The first thing is that Russia must have its own representation in the international bodies. The second point—representation of the former USSR—will have to be settled by the commonwealth of states formed in Minsk.

[LE FIGARO] Who will occupy the seat on the UN Security Council?

[Burbulis] I personally believe that both Russia and a representative of the Commonwealth formed in Minsk should have a seat.

[LE FIGARO] Will this Commonwealth have a president?

[Burbulis] That is a dangerous question because you will immediately ask me whether it will be Gorbachev.... The most likely scenario is this: a council of heads of state and a council of heads of government. We will also certainly need a structure to coordinate the decisions of the parliaments.

[LE FIGARO] But will there be somebody above those collegial bodies authorized to speak on their behalf?

[Burbulis] I cannot answer you. I do not rule out a flexible system of representation in which the heads of state would each play the role of coordinator.

[LE FIGARO] So, no role for Gorbachev?

[Burbulis] There are objective laws of history which cannot be ignored. Politicial genius lies in understanding them. Gorbachev could certainly use his talents in the new structures. But it no longer depends on him alone.

[LE FIGARO] What is the fundamental difference, aside from the chosen name, between the Commonwealth which emerged from the Minsk agreement and the union which President Gorbachev wanted to create?

[Burbulis] President Gorbachev insisted on a very ambiguous legal formula, that of confederation. But that formula did not solve the problems facing the states. It contained the embryo of a threat of relapsing into totalitarianism.

To recover from the disease of communism, several stages are needed. One of them is the Minsk agreement, in other words the creation of a Commonwealth which will enable our societies to live through their period of convalescence and possible relapse. Perhaps one day we will need to move closer to each other within a more binding union....

[LE FIGARO] Does the Minsk agreement remove all danger of Russia calling into question the Ukrainian borders?

[Burbulis] Read Article 5 of the Minsk agreement. That article explains that the signatory states recognize the opening of their borders, common customs, a single currency, and a combined reform program. There are no border problems because the borders remain open!

[LE FIGARO] What will be the future of the Army within the new Commonwealth?

[Burbulis] According to Article 6 of the Minsk agreement, the Commonwealth member states are setting up a common military and strategic area and a single command for nuclear weapons.

[LE FIGARO] President Mitterrand has expressed his anxiety about a possible dissemination of nuclear weapons.

[Burbulis] I would like to reassure him. We have sufficient control over weapons, their installations, and all arms sales contracts.

[LE FIGARO] Does that mean that there will be no Ukrainian army, just a supranational army?

[Burbulis] I cannot give any definite reply to this question. The essence of our approach is that all the republics must confirm the importance they attach to a unified strategic area. This is true of the Navy, the Air Force, and strategic nuclear forces. All those forces will have a single command, but there will be joint control of the use of the forces.

In addition, most of the states will create their own military forces, their national guards. There will be a mixed model—federal forces, which will be small in number, and national forces.

[LE FIGARO] Is this formula for change satisfactory enough to avert any threat of a military putsch?

[Burbulis] Since the Minsk agreements, the risks of a putsch have diminished considerably.

[LE FIGARO] Why did only three republics take part in the creation of the Commonwealth? Is this an attempt to exclude the Muslim republics?

[Burbulis] All requests from republics to join will be examined. Why Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine? Because they are the three republics which were behind the creation of the USSR in 1922. Furthermore, the document creating the Commonwealth makes it possible to put forward some preconditions for new members. That is very important.

[LE FIGARO] You are building a Commonwealth, but the peoples are hungry. How will you feed them?

[Burbulis] Nobody has experience of emerging from a totalitarian communist regime. The most urgent need is to restore property. From 1 January, we will stop subsidizing the sovkhozes and kolkhozes and we will reduce spending on military industries. The task is huge, people do not have a mature mentality. What we are doing is being done in a situation similar to that which a chess player faces when are the moves are determined by the previous move. We are doomed to act.

'Sense Out of This Bedlam'

PM1712143391 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 12 Dec 91 p 1

[Article by Eduard Volodin under "Observer's Opinion" rubric: "Darkness Before the Dawn"]

[Text] The war is continuing. An unstoppable and debilitating war with the state which once bore the name of Russia, then was renamed the USSR, and is now dying before our eyes and with our assistance, amid our indifference, silence, and mournful groans, this time without a name at all. Because it is impossible to take the mockery seriously when in one week a country is enciphered with the abbreviation of USS [Union of Soviet States], and the next week the new organizers of universal prosperity pin to the state organism in its death throes the letters CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]. To judge by the unfolding events, new ciphers and new abbreviations are in the offing, and it is not we but, God willing, our grandchildren who will make sense out of this bedlam.

The events which took place in Belarus cannot be interpreted as an accident, a surprise, or a political bombshell. The statement on the formation of an alliance between the three Slav republics (and with an open subscription list for the former Union republics and the whole world), the abolition on paper of the USSR and the transfer of the capital to Minsk taken together spell only the latest phase of the national-state catastrophe. Let me underline that—everything that happened in Belarus does not mean a way out of the crisis, but only the latest phase of the catastrophe, and that is all. Behind the signed documents, statements and declarations there is not, and cannot be, any economic base, social force, or national foundation. For this reason, everything adopted in Belorussia amounts yet again to paper production, only deepening the schism of the country and producing a new round of nationalistic passions, economic chaos, and political degradation. Let me try to explain my position.

However the country is torn asunder, whatever vehement declarations of independence are adopted by parliamentary "freedom fighters," it remains an incontrovertible fact that not one of the independent countries of the Baltic regions or the Transcaucasus, nor, if the worse comes to the worse, Moldavia has yet existed for a single day as an independent economic state. The rulers of the Baltic states have been, and are, behaving especially cynically in this respect, reviling the USSR and Russia and openly and secretly carting out of the Soviet republics everything that is not tied down. However many attempts have been made over the last six years to destroy the single state economic complex, whatever the operatives of the shadow economy emerging from underground have wrought in the way of filching the people's property, economic relations are still intact, and the declaration that the USSR no longer exists changes nothing. The only "economic" consequence which the acts signed in Belarus could have is the further destruction of the economic system and an accelerated slide into economic impasse.

The political content of the Belarus documents is no less ephemeral and dramatic. To annul the USSR on paper today presents no difficulty. But no one can imagine what organ of power the alliance of independent (more precisely, of unknown) states will have. If a coordinating council, it will undoubtedly be powerless. If a central government, then who will elect it, and what powers will it have in relation to the three, or however many it may be, presidents of the independent states? What succession is there of the part (the three republics) in relation to the whole (the former USSR?) What, and whom, do the embassies of the former USSR of other countries represent? What is the attitude of the new political structure to the treaty obligations of the former USSR? Who is the owner of the the former USSR's property abroad?... I have listed just a few of the questions, and can assert right away that the authors of the Belarussian documents have no answers to them. On the other hand, further destruction of the remains of the political structure and the complete disregard of the country's political status on the world arena are realities, and statehood is being hammered to the point where a great power is turning into a political backwater—no better and no worse than the Baltic, Moldovan, or Transcaucasian backwaters.

The ideological contents of the documents and declarations are also extremely peculiar. Three republics unite, without uniting. They unite on paper even though each of them has made a Declaration of Sovereignty; this presupposes the existence of clearly outlined borders taking account of historical and ethnic realities. At the same time, our peoples have never had a period of separate national-historical existence, and the administrative borders carved out by the internationalists after the revolution and then arbitrarily changed by those same people meant nothing to Russians, Ukrainians, or

Belarussians. Therefore the unification of the three republics is only a natural necessity of the national existence of the East Slavs. At the same time, the principle of the three republics' independence will serve as a stimulus to separatism and mutual estrangement along national and religious lines, which will only strengthen the role of separatism in the politico-ideological life of our fraternal peoples.

There is a further ideological aspect in what has happened in Belarus. The way the accords were concluded (the disregard of the Islamic factor, that is to say, without informing the leadership of Kazakhstan, the Central Asian republics, or Azerbaijan) shows, to put it mildly, the ideological naivete of the documents' authors. Russia never allowed itself to show arrogance and scorn toward the Muslim world, and this was how it conserved and consolidated its ties with peoples choosing Islam as their destiny. This is why disregarding that world in preparing the meeting in Belarus is a serious ideological and political mistake which will deepen the process of disintegration and accelerate the destructive processes, this time at the levels of creed and ideology.

And it goes without saying that moving the capital to Minsk is a continuation of the glorious tradition of mercilessly pummeling Russian national dignity. For centuries we suffered and struggled for our independence and achieved our own statehood, not submitting to barbarians from East or West—only casually, and for the sake of pleasing not Belarussians or Ukrainians, but nationalists in Belarus and Ukraine and the demo-internationalists [demointernatsionalisty] in Russia, to dump Moscow as the capital of a great state. The political stunt with the new capital is just a stunt, of which the consequences can only provoke the righteous indignation of any Russian, any citizen of Russia, who has not yet lost his national dignity and has not forgotten his great and tragic history.

All that I have said above enabled me from the very outset to define the documents signed in Belarus as paper production and the latest stage in the national-state catastrophe. This catastrophe was unleashed some years ago, and everything that is happening now is only a stage, a condition, a consequence of the destruction of the Fatherland. The last act of our nation-state drama will be the events after the liberalization of prices, which will plunge 95 percent of the population into hunger, cold, and destitution, and this will determine its potential political development and its social base.

The whole world is already feeling the consequences of the catastrophe. Those who plotted the disintegration of a great power and the degradation of its peoples counted in vain that a catastrophe of such dimensions could be localized and not affect neighboring and distant states. But we are fated to drain the chalice to the dregs, and we will be courageous and steadfast—according to the legacy of our fathers, according to scripture and tradition.

We are still sliding with increasing speed and in full public view into an abyss of political, economic, and national chaos; but even in these circumstances we must think about revival. It is possible, it seems to me, only on the following basis. Everyone understands that presidential power in the former USSR represents no one and defends no one. With the beginning of the liberalization of prices people will part also with illusions regarding Russian power. A political vacuum will arise, which various political groupings, up to and including adventurists, will attempt to fill, and this will be the utmost limit of disintegration. And then, I think, a nationally oriented government will come to power—it is unimportant whether it will be dressed in democratic or authoritarian colors. It will be this government which will secure nationwide trust, and consequently, will possess a real social basis from which to implement its political will. It goes without saying that for Russia a national government is one which takes into account the will and interests of all the peoples who inhabit it. Its economic program will be directed toward reviving a viable economy—a mixed economy, but with the states having primacy in the basic sectors of industry; one that takes account of the world market, but defends national priorities above all; that develops enterprise, but does so in the name of nationwide prosperity.

Prospects Viewed

PM1712164791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 17 Dec 91 pp 1, 2

[Article by Miroslav Buzhkevich under the "Inside and Outside the Commonwealth of Independent States" rubric: "Belovezhskaya 'Trio': Each Plays His Own Part"]

[Text] More than 30 years ago, in the late fifties, a curious version of events that occurred in Belovezhskaya Forest was passed on by word of mouth. N. Khrushchev was very fond of hunting in that area. It all happened during one such performance.

A wild boar jumped out, Khrushchev "let him have it," and the boar fell, slain. The man with the gun triumphantly exclaimed: "I got him." Emerging from the bushes and looking at the leader from his height of almost 2 meters, A. Kirichenko, then second secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, riposted in an aggrieved manner: "Why you, Nikita Sergeyevich? I fired at the boar too. Let's cut out the bullet, and it will at once be clear whose it is." They cut it out. It turned out that the boar had been slain by the second secretary's bullet. The first secretary grunted, and his eyes flashed. Some time later the marksman was unsaddled—he was sent to a party voivodship in Rostov-na-Donu.

Nowadays, once again, everyone is hearing about the Belovezhskaya Forest, only not in respect of "czarist hunting." For a far more important reason, of state and world significance. The leaders of Russia, Ukraine, and

Belarus signed a statement on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. A step which could be a turning point in Soviet history.

Political experts and journalists are very quick to make assessments of what happens—the grass will not grow under their feet, as the saying goes. Very diverse descriptions of this document have appeared in newspaper pages and in television and radio programs: "Slavic Entente," "Brest Peace," "Triple Pact," and so on. However different all these assessments might be, on the whole society welcomes this step, seeing it as a departure from the fruitless Novo-Ogarevo big maneuvers and a switch to accelerating the resolution of political-state problems. This time there seems to be a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. However, it is too early to labor under a delusion. The first reefs have already appeared.

Let me remind you that after the August events M. Gorbachev put a lot of effort into reviving the interrupted Novo-Ogarevo process. And he succeeded in this. Although it was a sluggish process, by the middle of November a new draft of the Union treaty, agreed in principle with all the members of the State Council, had appeared. Addressing a news conference in Novo-Ogarevo 14 November, B. Yeltsin categorically told us journalists: "There will be a Union!" But two weeks later he expounded to his colleagues on the State Council a litany of criticisms and amendments, virtually torpedoing the initialing of the draft treaty. On that day a very confused M. Gorbachev had already come out alone to us, reported some kind of mythical collective initialing of this document, and said, clearly waiving the truth: "Boris Nikolayevich is also in favor!"

It seems that B. Yeltsin, whose initiative in concluding the Belovezhskaya agreements is obvious, could now end up in Gorbachev's position. The haste with which they were signed can be accounted for by many reasons. One of these is the complexity of the Russian administration's position. Ahead lies the implementation of radical economic reforms, in which price liberalization occupies an important place. Given the universal scarcity of goods and food, as a number of serious politicians admit, it could cause a social explosion. In order to cushion and reduce its force, it is important for the RSFSR president and his government to give Russians hope that the difficulties of the transition to the market will quickly be surmounted. Which is impossible without resolving political problems.

However, each member of the Belovezhskaya "trio" plays his own part. The ink was still drying on the signatures to the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States when an alarm signal sounded in Kiev. The Ukrainian parliament ratified the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States and the other documents signed by the three republics' leaders 8 December, but with amendments. Adopting the flexibility of Mikhail Sergeyevich, Boris Nikolayevich assured the RSFSR Supreme Soviet deputies, who had not been familiarized with these amendments, that they are mainly of an editorial nature. But, at the same time, the Ukrainian parliamentarians' "elaborations" essentially call the future of the new commonwealth in question. Instead of coordinating, they deemed it possible only to consult on foreign policy activity, emigration policy, and the development of a common economic area. But how can this exist, when Ukraine intends to have its own railroads and so detach itself from the country's transport system? And how are questions of defense to be resolved, if Ukrainian armed forces have already appeared, headed by President L. Kravchuk, the supreme commander in chief? His 15 December television interview on these questions did not impart full clarity.

A second slice of last week's events. According to the official version, Kazakh President N. Nazarbayev did not go to Minsk and Belovezhskaya Forest because the leaders of the three republics were unable to contact him while he was in the air. A naive explanation, to say the least, designed for simpletons—any airplane has radio communications, which the crew and people on the ground use to keep in constant contact. The hurt Nazarbayev set out for Ashkhabad, where his colleagues—the presidents of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenia—gathered on 12 December. They discussed the statement of the three on the Commonwealth of Independent States until 0400 hours, bearing in mind the latter's proposal to join the new community with rights as associate members. They absolutely disliked the last point—the role of secondary states did not suit them. As a result, the five presidents treated with understanding the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States, for this is the most acceptable thing under the present conditions of political and economic crisis. They are agreeable to joining the Commonwealth, but only as cofounders with equal rights. In addition, the agreement itself is in need of a thorough reworking and, thus, a new initialing. All this was agreed with B. Yeltsin.

But what about L. Kravchuk? Proposals to create a confederation were heard in Ashkhabad. Any mention of some kind of statehood, albeit even of a confederative type, causes a yellow and blue allergy in many Ukrainian leaders. L. Kravchuk firmly insists that Ukraine, as a sovereign state, will not join any community even with a hint of some interrepublic organs—without which a confederation is inconceivable. Incidentally, the Russian president has already declared in the RSFSR Supreme Soviet that the present Interstate Economic Committee and its structures will not move to Minsk as planned but will continue to function in Moscow.

No "blitz" has been forthcoming with the Commonwealth of Independent States. The leaders of the Central Asian republics have decided not to act impetuously but to consult their parliaments. They will gather in Alma-Ata at the end of this week to discuss the current situation together with B. Yeltsin and his partners in the Belovezhskaya agreement. However, this will most likely happen without L. Kravchuk, who has declared that he

will not go to Alma-Ata just in order to stand in the second row and watch his Central Asian colleagues sign an agreement.

And what of M. Gorbachev? He seems to perceive a rational kernel in the process which has begun. The Central Asian leaders' position was most probably to his liking. If they become cofounders of the Commonwealth of Independent States, then all the former participants in the Novo-Ogarevo "sittings" will end up in the same harness. And then, maybe, a place will be found for him in the renewed community. But for now he is receiving pop "stars" and speaking on the telephone with foreign colleagues. And he bears with satisfaction the title of supreme commander in chief of the armed forces of a state which, so many people believe, no longer exists.

Recalling the wild boar hunt long ago in Belovezhskaya Forest, I could not help asking myself: Will any of the three leaders who concluded the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States in that blessed corner end up on the distant political periphery? In other words, will this mean the end of the very important process which has begun, aimed at surmounting all sorts of crises which are tearing apart our long-suffering homeland and each of the republic-states which are now taking shape? As even inveterate atheists now say: God forbid! Last week people imbibed a sip of hope. This cannot be allowed to prove a vain hope for the umpteenth time. Everything here depends on the initiators of the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States and the leaders of the republics who want to join them and enter the commonwealth.

It was not possible to resolve at a stroke, in a matter of days, all the problems associated with its birth. Such a thing happens frequently in politics. We must not back down and lose heart. Our land is not lacking in bright minds. It is important that they at last find a common language and arrive at concord and the wise accomplishment of their initiatives. This is the expectation of hundreds of millions of people, who are tired and exhausted by a hard life.

Economic

International Consortium Extends Bank Credit

LD1712103391 Hamburg DPA in German 0901 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Frankfurt/Main (DPA/VWD)—An international banking group has granted an extension of credit to the Foreign Economic Bank of the former USSR responsible for foreign debt repayment. This extension applies to obligations incurred before 1 January 1991, which are due by 31 March 1992. A steering committee of the banks, led by the Deutsche Bank, agreed at a meeting in Frankfurt/Main last night to a Foreign Economic Bank request.

A Deutsche Bank statement says that the Foreign Economic Bank confirmed its intention to pay the interest accruing on all debts by the due dates. The steering committee has set up a subcommittee to investigate the economic situation and other technical details of debt repayment with the Foreign Economic Bank. This subcommittee will be chaired by Bank of America. The steering committee itself will meet again in March 1992 at the latest. Details about the rescheduling amount involved are not yet available.

EC Food Aid to Former Republics Detailed

PM1712144091 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report by special correspondent G. Shipitko: "Moscow and Petersburg Will Get Help From the West and Vologda"]

[Text] The outcome of the talks with the EC Commission, as was noted at a news conference given by I. Silayev, chairman of the Interstate Economic Committee, and G. Kulik, his first deputy, was the conclusion of an agreement. Under the agreement, the EC Commission is to grant credit of nearly 1.2 billion ECUs [European currency units] ($1.5 billion) for the purchase of food for the sovereign states that have signed the agreement on paying off the foreign economic debt of the former Union.

It is proposed to direct nearly half the funds into acquiring food for three Russian cities—Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Yekaterinburg. That sum is sufficient to buy meat for two months, or butter for three months, for the population of these cities. The sole condition imposed by the EC Commission on the use of the credit, which is offered at 7 percent interest, is that the food must be bought from the countries of the former Eastern Europe and the Baltic states. True, in I. Silayev's opinion, this last condition is hardly feasible—the Baltic states do not have enough food for themselves. It has also been decided that food products supplied to Moscow will not be subject to duty.

Recent events, leading to the creation of the union of the three—a concept that is fundamentally supported by the other sovereign states—have made it possible to take the step of concluding a treaty on allocating U.S. credits of $1.5 billion for the purchase of grain, while Italy plans to offer credits of 1,500 billion lire ($1.2 billion) for the supply of essential goods.

A delegation is to fly to Brussels soon with the task of organizing deliveries of the first food consignments. But by all appearances, the role of feeding the former Union will not suit our Western investors for long. Along with direct aid, the EC Commission is allocating a further 400 million ECUs for technical assistance for the economic reforms. In the near future, some 1,500 experts in banking, economics, and enterprise will come to Moscow. Their task—to teach us to operate under market conditions.

Problems Caused by Fuel Shortages Detailed

75 Aeroflot Cancellations

LD1712235791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2155 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent V. Luskanov; from the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] Today, 17 December 1991, Aeroflot has cancelled 75 flights. Passengers can neither travel to nor from 87 of the country's airports. There is only one reason—there is no fuel. There is no fuel in Simferopol, Sochi, Tashkent, Mineralnyye Vody, or in many other cities. Even in Moscow, there is only sufficient aviation fuel for 10 days.

This map at the Civil Aviation Central Air Traffic Control marks the destinations with which air links have been broken off. The situation is critical in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and the north Caucasus. Planes, their tanks half full, hop from one airport to the next like crickets, making many extra stops. In the words of one air traffic controller, the planes are arriving at their destinations through sheer will power.

Operational information says that, in the next day or two, 10,000 tonnes of fuel will be transferred to the northern Caucasus as an emergency measure. Tomorrow, there will be life at Petropavlovsk- Kamchatskiy Airport. There is no other good news as yet. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of people languish for days in the departure lounges. Because of the fuel shortage, the country's air force is close to its final breath. In a word, there is no fuel in Moscow because the oil workers have reduced production, while in Tyumen they are reducing production because they can't get workers to the oil fields by plane. A vicious circle. [video shows correspondent at airport surrounded by tired travellers; board shows that flights to Osh, Dushanbe, Bishkek, Baku, Chita, and Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy are among those cancelled; huge chart of the closed airports shown]

'Serious Incident' at Tomsk Airport

LD1712185491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Fuel shortages are even beginning to affect the work of airports, which were considered to be relatively well off. There was a serious incident in Tomsk on 16 December. Aleksandr Chernykh reports:

[Chernykh] It seems that nothing foreshadowed the conflict. Tomsk Airport is also suffering from a shortage of fuel, of course. But until recently, flights were run firmly according to schedule. Passengers on the flight from Tomsk to Mineralnyye Vody, which is in the Caucasus, cherished the hope that they would arrive on time at the airport of their destination. But the departure was regularly postponed. The fact of the matter is that the plane should have refuelled at Omsk, the intermediate point, but unfortunately Omsk was closed due to bad weather. There wasn't any spare fuel in Tomsk.

Passengers on the ill-fated flight spent an entire 24 hours in tense expectation. They listened to announcements on the departure of scheduled flights, at first jealously and then with ever greater annoyance. There was an emotional outburst when they realized that they might have to wait another 24 hours. Having heard that the Tomsk-St. Petersburg flight was about to take off, the passengers on the Mineralnyye Vody flight burst on to the airstrip and blocked the St. Petersburg plane. They tried, thus, to draw attention to their desperate position, if not to seize the plane. Talks between leaders of the Tomsk Aviation Company and the rebellious passengers lasted a whole hour. Finally, an understanding was reached that the flight would refuel in Novosibirsk. Neighbours came to the rescue, and after a wait of 24 hours, the people took off.

Those responsible for creating the dangerous situation on the airstrip are under investigation, but nobody today can give any guarantees that similar situations won't reoccur. There isn't any fuel to spare, and our compatriots' desire to travel will hardly reduce the number of Aeroflot passengers in the near future. Perhaps higher prices of tickets will have a sobering affect? But the New Year is still a while off! Aleksandr Chernykh, Tomsk.

Far East Fishing Fleet Stalled

OW1812065091 Moscow Central Television First Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1030 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Video report by L. Savitskiy; from the "TV Inform" program]

[Text] Our country's impoverished stores will soon become even more destitute. The fishermen of the Far East stopped fishing and distributing their products.

[Savitskiy] Such a spectacle may be observed in all the ports and bays of the Atlantic Ocean shore. Floating fish canning factories and fish processing ships are laid out; hundreds of trawlers did not put out to sea, and for one reason only—the lack of fuel and diesel oil. [video shows ships laid up in port, interview with unidentified man]

[Man] The situation is catastrophic, terrible; it has never been like this. Salmon and saury fishing expeditions used to arrive here.

[Savitskiy] How much fish was the state deprived of because of this situation?

[Man] About three thousand tonnes every day, and we are short of something like (?30,000) tonnes of fish altogether, because fuel was not delivered and the expeditions were canceled.

According to our data, the Far East supplies about 70 percent of the catch in Russia. If we mess up the Sea of Okhotsk expedition, the most important one, than we have

no way of catching up later on. It will be a catastrophe, a real catastrophe. I see no other definition for it.

[Stroykov] All appeals by Far East residents to the Russian Government to help get the allocated fuel funds went unanswered. Meanwhile, the state is deprived daily of 2 million rubles worth of products.

'Hundreds' of Trucks Export Goods Westward

PM1712153191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1600 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Report by A. Guretskiy, A. Sinegubov; from the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] [Guretskiy] We are, by now, used to waiting in lines on the western border. But this is unprecedented. It is not just our trucks that are waiting to leave the Union, but there also hundreds of foreign companies' heavy trucks. Some have been waiting to cross the border at the Kozlovichi border, crossing near Brest for two days and nights. However, let us not be rash with conclusions and start blaming our and the Polish customs services, although it is obvious that the Polish side cannot cope with this sort of traffic.

Rather, let us ponder why so many trucks are heading west? The answer lies in these documents, which cannot be doubted. But if they are to be believed, it appears that the trucks heading west are by no means empty, that they are taking out goods that are in extremely short supply in our country. And imagine that, in the overwhelming majority of cases, they are taking out these goods quite legally. What is being exported today, for example?

[G.N. Belavin, "Western Bug" customs section chief] Judging by these documents, the most diverse goods are being exported. This includes nonferrous metals and, according to these documents, even meat products, timber goods, dairy produce, and wine and spirits. It is impossible to name everything.

[Guretskiy] So, don't believe that our country is entirely destitute. There are goods in our country, but simply not for everyone! Aleksey Guretskiy reporting especially for the Television News Service.

Scientific

Nuclear Reactors for Sale on World Market

LD1612231991 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0800 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Station commentary read by announcer Aleksey Abakumov]

[Text] As we have already reported, a Soviet nuclear reactor was offered for sale last week at the first international auction to be held in Moscow. There has been a mixed reaction abroad to this report. Now that Soviet nuclear reactors are becoming freely available for sale, is it really safe to buy them, bearing in mind the sad experience of Chernobyl? One ought to add straightaway that this will not be the first time the Soviet Union has exported its reactors to other countries. In the past, they have been supplied to members of the former socialist camp, among others.

Now the plan is to place Soviet nuclear reactors for sale on the international market. The idea is that they should compete with similar reactors from the United States, France, Germany and Great Britain. International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] specialists believe that the Russians hope to win advantageous contracts and to force down prices on the world market for nuclear equipment.

Obviously the Republic has not resorted to this just for the hell of it. A tidy sum can be obtained for a reactor, and in hard currency, which we are desperately short of. IAEA possesses information that Russia intends to build new atomic stations in countries like India, North Korea, China, and Iran. There are indications that these countries have already approached Russia with proposals on this score.

As far as quality is concerned, specialists are quite cautious in their judgments. It is thought that many potential clients will be very wary of the reactors, despite their relative cheapness. The encouraging thing is that, following Chernobyl, western countries have drawn up a program to help the Soviet side come up with reliable new safety systems.

However, there is another side of the coin. What will happen if somebody purchases a Soviet reactor on the cheap, and then uses it to produce an atomic bomb? Specialists believe this is scarcely likely. In the first place, the IAEA operates an effective system of control. Second, it would take at least 10 years to adapt a reactor to produce a single atomic bomb. So, in this respect, Soviet nuclear equipment is not of great interest.

However, there is no doubt - and this is the view of IAEA specialists—that there will, in fact, be a market overseas to which the Russian authorities will wish to auction for peaceful purposes.

Scientist Views Nuclear Research Issues

OW1612134591 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japanese 1210 GMT 16 Dec 91

["Interview" with Garidanskiy, director of the USSR Nuclear Physic Research Institute, by unidentified reporter from "NHK News 21" program; place and date not given—recorded; Garidanskiy speaks in Russian with simultaneous Japanese translation in subtitles; processed from Japanese]

[Text] Our reporter has interviewed Garidanskiy, director of the USSR Nuclear Physic Research Institute.

[Garidanskiy] The most important thing is to designate a person who will assume responsibility for controlling

nuclear weapons. Gorbachev is the most desirable person to assume such responsibility because he has made a great contribution to world peace, and his contribution is rated highly around the world. The Soviet Union should not unilaterally dismantle nuclear weapons; the Soviet Union and the United States should cooperate with each other in their dismantling. If the Soviet Union unilaterally dismantles nuclear weapons, this would be unequal. Any unilateral dismantling of nuclear weapons by the Soviet Union will certainly hurt the pride of the Soviet people and will provoke objection to such dismantling.

Military

Gorbachev Decree Signed on Disciplinary Rules

PM1712132591 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

["Decree of the USSR President 'On Changes to the Disciplinary Regulations of the USSR Armed Forces,' dated 13 December 1991 and signed by USSR President M. Gorbachev, the Kremlin, Moscow"]

[Text] With a view to strengthening legality within the USSR Armed Forces and enhancing servicemen's responsibility for executing orders, and in accordance with USSR Supreme Soviet Resolution of 30 August 1991 "On Immediate Steps To Avert Attempts to Carry Out a Coup d'Etat," I resolve:

That Article 6 of the Disciplinary Regulations of the USSR Armed Forces, ratified by USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium decree of 30 July 1975 (VEDOMOSTI VERKHNOGO SOVETA SSSR No. 33, 1975, p 495), read as follows:

"6. The interests of defending the Homeland oblige a commander (chief) to resolutely and firmly demand observance of military discipline and order and not to disregard any misdemeanor by a subordinate.

"An order given by a commander (chief) must be carried out unquestioningly, precisely, and on time.

"A commander (chief) bears responsibility for the legality of the order he gives, the consequences of its execution, and for failure to take steps to carry out the order.

"On receiving an order, a serviceman is entitled to clarify the content and procedure of its execution.

"A servicemen who does not execute an order given by a commander (chief) is liable as established by the law."

[Signed] USSR President M. Gorbachev
The Kremlin, Moscow, 13 December 1991

Gorbachev Approves 'New Text' of Military Oath

LD1712165191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1600 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] Mikhail Gorbachev has approved the new text of the military oath.

Attaches Briefed on Gorbachev, Yeltsin Talks

PM1712162991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Dec 91 Second Edition p 3

[Unattributed report: "Meeting With Military Attaches"]

[Text] A meeting took place 12 December at the USSR Ministry of Defense's External Relations Directorate between Lieutenant General V. Manilov and foreign military attaches. The military diplomats were informed about the speeches of USSR President M. Gorbachev and RSFSR President B. Yeltsin to the senior leaders of the USSR Armed Forces.

The chief of the USSR Ministry of Defense Information Directorate answered questions. The conversation took place in an atmosphere of frankness, amicability, and mutual understanding. Agreement was reached on holding such meetings on a regular basis.

General Interviewed on Army's Challenges

PM1712143791 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 17 Dec 91 p 1

[Interview with Lieutenant General L. Ivashov, chief of the USSR Defense Ministry Administration of Affairs, by A. Orlov, under the rubric "The Army Today"; place and date not given: "Facing Crisis Alone"—first paragraph is editorial introduction]

[Text] Lt. Gen. L. Ivashko, chief of the USSR Defense Ministry Administration of Affairs, speaks to us today.

[Orlov] Leonid Grigoryevich, two meetings were held recently at the Defense Ministry—with the USSR president and the RSFSR president. These events attracted great attention. What impressions did the participants in these meetings take away with them?

[Ivashov] The military anticipated both meetings—with M.S. Gorbachev and with B.N. Yeltsin—with great interest. Both meetings were useful. I think that the questions that are current now—Whose Army is it: Gorbachev's or Yeltsin's?—do not reflect the problems that worry the Army most of all. We have a people's army, a united army; it serves the Fatherland. The participants in the meeting perceived the two presidents' positions correctly—take the path of reforms, prevent the disintegration of society and the country, and preserve the unified Armed Forces. Men in uniform must be

protected legally and socially. B.N. Yeltsin's dialogue with the military was more specific.

[Orlov] Meanwhile, the Armed Forces are going through times that are far from the best: The financing of troops is being curtailed; a number of republics are announcing that they are assuming jurisdiction over units located in those regions; and military property and installations are being declared the property of sovereign states....

[Ivashov] Yes, this is unfortunately true. The crisis phenomena in our state, which was united until recently, have affected the whole system of defense and have hit people in uniform very hard.

Do you see what is going on now over the military camps in the Baltic, the Transcaucasus, and the North Caucasus?

[Orlov] The impression is being created that the Army is being provoked to great bloodshed....

[Ivashov] It looks very much that way. It must be understood that people's patience is not infinite. Military men are men of duty. Their nerves are strong, but the situation in the military collectives in some regions now is such that it only needs a spark to ignite an explosion.

This also applies to the attempts to seize Armed Forces' property. The Law "On Ownership in the USSR" says that the property of the USSR Armed Forces is all-union property; that is, it belongs to all the republics.

There are a lot in favor of a unified Armed Forces. It should also be taken into account that troop concentrations and military installations were not created uniformly by territories of the republics, but on the basis of military-strategic considerations. Major efforts were focused on sealing the borders with neighboring states, and countering the likely enemy's most powerful concentrations. All the strategic systems—air defense, missile defense, control, intelligence—are joint systems. To remove one of the elements would paralyze the work of the entire system. In short, any annexation of a given part of the Army will not only destroy the defense and security of each republic, but will also cause extra tension in interrepublic relations.

[Orlov] There are attempts now to split the Army, not only into national, but also into private compartments. We have in mind the hordes of entrepreneurs and businessmen who would like to absorb, and are absorbing, pieces of the "military pie."

[Ivashov] I cannot recall a single occasion in recent years when someone came to help the Army; instead they say "give"—and want as much as they can get. For example, some people from Kursk came to a reception with the minister. They wore Afghan veterans' uniforms. Some even had canes—wounded men. "Help us develop our village, we are about to start on this. Give us some Kamaz trucks and other equipment, we will repay you." They got what they wanted—at residual, state prices, of course. And 10 days later that same equipment "surfaced" at a Moscow commodity market at ten times the price. Inquiries have been made about the firm—they had no intention of developing any village.

There have been so many promises to give servicemen social support! Promises on the construction of housing, the provision of goods, and the retraining of those discharged from military service... We will do it all, they say, just give us this and that. For a certain time, the Defense Ministry went halfway to meet these requests. But when they were checked out, as a rule it proved to be a crude deception that now goes by the name of commerce.

[Orlov] What defense is there against such theft? Should the sale of Army surplus stock be halted completely?

[Ivashov] But the Army does not have any particular surplus stocks today. It has outdated military hardware and other property. We know what the demand for all this is; we are obliged to consider the interests of the state, defense, and the protection of servicemen. Thus, I can tell you that in accordance with the defense minister's order, based on the USSR president's decree, military commercial structures are now being formed.

Colonel General V. Litvinov has been appointed chief of the USSR Defense Ministry's Commercial Center. The center will be made up of commercial directorates for the sale of rear services property and arms and military hardware, directorates for capital construction and the sale of fixed capital and real estate... Commercial directorates, departments, and groups are also being created in branches of the Armed Forces, categories of troops, in fleets, armies, and flotillas. It is planned to create commodity exchanges for military hardware and property, as well as a special bank.

[Orlov] In previous years, and this year as well, the Defense Ministry assisted the national economy in harvesting, in the construction of civilian facilities, in the shipment of freight, and so forth. Was all this done free of charge?

[Ivashov] Of course it was free. But let us consider the effectiveness of this help. First, troops are taken away from their immediate work—combat training. Military hardware is worn out, and large amounts are spent on redeploying motorized battalions. And what is the economic effect? Here are some figures for the current year. Some 148,500 servicemen were sent to do sundry jobs this year, and 54,000 items of equipment of various types were used. Thus, the motorized battalions—80 of them were formed (66 for the RSFSR, 14 for Kazakhstan)—earned 66 million rubles [R]. But maintaining the motorized battalions and their redeployment cost R153.3 million. Thus, expenditure exceeded income by around R90 million.

It is not a question of poor work, but of the actual organization of work. It is also a question of the approach of several kray and oblast leaders to the use of military formations, and their attitude toward soldiers as

a free workforce. Because of insufficient work alone, vehicle idle time in harvesting amounted to 974,000 machine-days; that is, 24 out of 80 battalions did no harvesting work at all.

The Defense Ministry understands the national economy's difficulties. But the Army must not be treated in such a casual manner. Thus, in the future it is planned that such work will be performed on the basis of contracts concluded with military units, with reciprocal payments between the sides at contract prices. This will be a form of discipline both for military units and for those who request help.

Border Guard Support for Commonwealth Noted

LD1612144291 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2245 GMT 13 Dec 91

[From the "Military News" section]

[Text] 54 percent of the 3,500 Soviet border guards in seven border districts support the agreement on forming the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). 51 percent of the asked border guard officers approve of the agreement, among volunteer staff the number is 55 percent, among draft conscripts—57 percent. Accordingly 32, 28 and 30 percent of border guard staff have not yet defined their attitude toward the agreement. At present there are 10 border districts and a special arctic border guard unit in the country.

Pacific Navy To Scrap Two Cruisers

OW1812025891 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1500 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Soviet Pacific navy cruisers ALEXANDER SUVOROV and LAZAREV will soon sail to India to be scrapped, reports the rear headquarters of the Pacific Navy.

Another ship, the missile cruiser VARYAG, will be cut up in the USSR.

Defense Ministry To Sell Excess Equipment

LD1812024491 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1300 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Text] A commercial center has been set up at the Soviet Defense Ministry. It will be selling redundant military technical equipment, such as transport planes, automobiles, and electronic gear. Annually, such equipment becomes redundant at a figure of half a billion rubles. Brokers' offices are being established on the defense facilities to make deals. According to the chief of the new commercial center, General (Vladislav Litvinov), no military hardware will be sold to other countries.

Baltic Affairs

Further on Security Seminar in Vilnius

LD1712150991 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] A seminar entitled "International Security and the Baltic States" opened today at the conference hall of the Lietuva Hotel in Vilnius. Correspondent Zenonas Miksys reports from the conference hall:

Even six months ago nobody would have thought that generals and admirals of the NATO countries, members of the North Atlantic Assembly, and diplomats of many foreign states would visit Vilnius. It was also impossible to imagine that Lithuania would establish normal diplomatic relations with NATO, strengthening Lithuania's position in the world community and ensuring national security. But Vilnius has been selected for a seminar organized by the North Atlantic Assembly on the problems of the security of the new independent states: Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

The seminar began at 0900 today in the conference hall of the Lietuva Hotel in Vilnius. For the first time we see publicly and officially the emblems in the blue background of NATO which used to be much abused and scorned in the former Soviet Union. We also see inscriptions in English and French: The North Atlantic Assembly. On the tables we see the flags of the United States, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Portugal, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, the Ukraine, and other countries. Hungary, Poland, Finland, Sweden, the Russian Federation, and the Ukraine are represented here by parliamentary delegations. This important seminar is attended by a large group of the deputies of the Lithuanian Supreme Council and leaders of the Ministry of National Defense.

Although high-ranking officers of various countries are attending the seminar, they are all in civilian clothes. Only generals and colonels of the Soviet Army, who have been invited as observers, are parading their red stripes, epaulettes, and stars.

The seminar was opened by Mr. Jan Peterssen from Norway, who is the chairman of the subcommittee of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union of the North Atlantic Assembly and a member of the committee for joint control of the strategy and armaments. He called on Vytautus Landsbergis, chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, to speak. He devoted his speech to the relations with the former USSR and the pullout of its army from Lithuania. Landsbergis cordially welcomed the participants in the seminar and wished them success in their work.

Problems of the security of the Baltic states were described by Dr. Peter Corterier, general secretary of the North Atlantic Assembly. Reports on political aspects of the need for security in Lithuania and the formation of national armed forces were delivered by a deputy of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, Mecys Laurinkus, and the Lithuanian minister of national defense, Audrius Butkevicius. Discussions began on these issues.

Landsbergis Addresses Seminar

LD1712200991 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1400 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Speech by Lithuanian Supreme Council Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis at a seminar entitled "International Security and the Baltic States" held in Vilnius on 17 December—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] The fact that security of the Baltic region is an international problem may be unwillingly stressed by the military semantics of the Soviet Union's leadership. The Soviet Union's president has called its country's army, still deployed in the Baltic countries, the Northwestern Military Group. In the times of the Russian tsars Lithuania was called the northwestern country. But we no longer live in the times of the tsars, and the Soviet Union does not regard the Baltic states, at least in official documents, as its territory. It has once again recognized, after 1920, that the Baltic states are completely sovereign, separate, independent states. Thus this term northwestern, as used by the army, can mean only one thing—the direction, the needle of the compass, or the direction of strategic expansion, the interests to the northwest of the Soviet Union. According to such a compass, the direction northwest points even farther, to Sweden, and even Finland can now feel (?being together with the Balts).

It will be interesting to see if this army, with which we do not want to have any conflicts, when it is withdrawn from the Baltic states, will still be called the armed force of the northwestern direction. If not, it would be better to change this name now, and the semantics would show the changed policy, a policy of peace. It would be much better if this army would be called an army group being withdrawn from the Baltic states. According to such a compass, it could be pointing in the direction of east or southeast, because if the army is withdrawn to the west from Lithuania, to Kaliningrad Oblast, the security of the Baltic or even of a larger region would by no means increase. [passage omitted]

We have seen how the Soviet Army bases have been used as a shelter for putschists and terrorists. We do not know if this will happen in the future. The bases may be the source for supplying weapons to underground terrorist groups. We hope that until this army leaves Lithuania, its leadership will take very strict measures not to maintain any contacts between the army units and those groups left by the former repressive structures, which surely are operating underground. The military bases store weapons, and we do not know what kind. We hope that there are no nuclear weapons or other means of mass destruction. We have been unable to establish this. Lithuania has its international obligations; it has joined the convention of nuclear nonproliferation. It has its

responsibility, and therefore it must be able to say: There are no such weapons in Lithuania. Lithuania will be able to state this with absolute certainty when these bases, which may have such weapons, do not exist in Lithuania. [passage omitted]

A foreign army which is deployed in any country without that country's permission is de facto an occupation army. This word does not mean any insult, it is an objective fact. [passage omitted]

We understand that this army, which has stayed much too long in Lithuania after World War II, is to us, to Lithuania, a problem of military security. To Russia it is a political problem. We hope that Russia and its democratic leadership wishes to solve this problem. This is not as easy as Russia's economic, social and political problems. To two countries—one big and the other small—is it difficult to solve it speedily and effectively? It must be solved speedily and effectively. [passage omitted] It must be solved as an international European problem. Other European countries must contribute to the solution of this problem. They can and, I think, must contribute economically and financially and with the resources of experts and observers.

We could ponder upon yet another aspect or possibility that seems to be more theoretical at present. If the big East and the big West would display interest and strive for a speedy solution to this problem, they could make a statement on all-round guarantees to Lithuania's security. Maybe Lithuania could think about its pre-war traditional neutrality. Maybe the Baltic states could be seen as a specific zone of security and trust about which the West and the East have reliably agreed upon. But it is unlikely that such a solution is ripening and such an agreement is being sought.

Therefore, Lithuania and, I think, other Baltic states, are turning toward European and international guarantees from the West. Lithuania naturally would like to be in the zone of NATO political protection. This organization is inclined to take care of security even beyond the territorial borders of its members. It must be interested in extinguishing conflicts. Lithuania, since 15 June 1940, is in a conflict not of its own choice. We wish to end this conflict. [passage omitted]

We wish to trust our big neighbors, but we are unavoidably observing them with great attention. We are and will draw conclusions from the behavior of our neighbors. We are and will be striving for good and very good relations, because they are the most reliable and the greatest guarantee of Lithuania's security. But we must also ponder upon the possibility of other guarantees in order to take care not only of ourselves, but also to contribute to the future of a peaceful and secure Europe. [passage omitted]

Estonia

Protest of Border Guard Detachment Detailed

OW1712235191 Moscow BALTFAX in English 2015 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonia's Foreign Ministry has sent a note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR to protest against the arrival in the republic of an additional detachment of Soviet border guards.

In its previous bulletins, BALTFAX has already reported that on December 17 a special train with 600 Soviet border guards arrived in Tallinn, where it was held up for almost six hours by Estonian police and units from the Department of State and Border Security.

The note says the republic's government has learned that as far as a month ago the USSR's General Staff and Committee for Border Security had drawn up plans to increase the number of border guards stationed in Estonia by sending there the recruits called up in the autumn. However, neither the government of Estonia, nor its parliament were notified.

Such actions, the note runs on, may be qualified as disrespect for generally accepted norms of international law and interference in the internal affairs of an independent country.

A BALTFAX correspondent reports from Tallinn that the train carrying border guard reinforcements left the city at 8 P.M. and is now 20 km away from it, where Soviet border guards already stationed there have provided food for the recruits. The train is being accompanied by Estonian border guards. It is expected that during the night the train will be routed towards Pskov.

Mr. Toomas Puura, an official from the Department of State and Border Defense, told BALTFAX that Estonia intends to bring up the question during a meeting of Soviet and Estonian work groups on military matters, which is to take place in St. Petersburg on December 19.

KGB Weapons Transferred to Border Guards

OW1812025191 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1430 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Within a few days Estonia will complete the reception of arms owned by the USSR KGB branch in Estonia. Estonian Interior Minister Olev Laanjarv told a news conference in Tallinn that these arms would be transferred to Estonian border guards.

Latvia

Government To Combat Crime, Mafia

OW1812001191 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1700 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Latvian Government is deeply concerned about the growth of crime and intends to actively combat it. According to the newspaper "DIENA", that was stated by republican Premier Ivars Godmanis who spoke at the congress of local self-government bodies. In his words, "If the growth of organized crimes is not stopped immediately, very soon Latvia will be similar to some South American countries dominated by mafia".

Mr. Godmanis said that the government plans to tighten the border control, to improve police activities, reorganize trade network, including commercial shops, and improve the taxation system. Car-selling markets where, in the premier's words, "racket and various machinations are thriving" will be strictly controlled.

Mr. Godmanis said that trade enterprises settling in hard currency or exchanging it (especially, "Parex" company owning most exchange offices in the republic) will also be thoroughly controlled. In the opinion of Mr. Godmanis, Latvia should impose a tax in hard currency on enterprises selling goods or offering services for hard currency.

In order to discourage the removal of goods from Latvia, the premier proposes to raise prices on air and train tickets. For example, a train ticket to Moscow could cost 500 rubles, he suggests.

Lithuania

NATO Official Supports Soviet Withdrawal

OW1812035591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] NATO fully supports Lithuania's position on the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the republic, said NATO Deputy Secretary General Simon Lun in an interview with the Lithuanian radio. The NATO official is participating in the NATO Vilnius seminar on the security of the Baltic countries.

The NATO executive expressed the hope that the seminar members would be able to work out principles for a secure Baltic region "that will be acceptable to the NATO, the Baltic nations and the USSR." According to him, "the Soviet Union must take into account that the republic is an associate NATO member before planning the military activity of its troops in Lithuania."

Republic To Raise Arms Transfer at Talks

PM1712153991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Captain Second Rank V. Gromak report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Lithuania Does Not Want To Pay Twice"]

[Text] Vilnius—Many sovereign republics of the former Union have recently proclaimed their rights to Soviet Army arms on their territories. Lithuania is also planning to raise this issue at the coming talks.

"The Baltic region, of which Lithuania is a part, is affected by various international agreements, including the Paris Convention," Norbertas Vidrinskas, chief of the Territorial Protection Ministry Main Staff, believes. "It regulates a great deal pertaining to the arms that are here. This problem will be raised at the talks without fail. When the Red Army occupied Lithuania, the property of three divisions and individual units—weapons, equipment, munitions, and fuel stocks—was transferred to it. I think this gives us every reason not only for saying but also for demanding that the arms which are here now should be handed over to Lithuania free of charge...."

Landsbergis Meets Soviet Military Commanders

OW1812024991 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1430 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to the Lithuanian news agency "ELTA", chairman of the Lithuanian parliament Vytautas Landsbergis met with commander of the Northwestern force of the Soviet Army, Colonel-General Valeroy Mironov on December 16th. Mr. Landsbergis says the two sides discussed political and economic questions related to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Lithuania. The Lithuanian side stressed that the military stationed in the republic should not maintain contacts with political forces opposing Lithuania (especially, with underground organizations which can buy or simply receive arms from the military). "ELTA" says General Mironov has agreed with that opinion.

Federation Affairs

Yeltsin Decree on Winter Emergency Prevention

PM1712170591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

["Decree by the President of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic 'On Immediate Measures to Ensure the Functioning of the RSFSR Power Industry, Transport, and Housing and Municipal Facilities in the 1991-92 Winter Period,'" dated 4 December 1991, the Kremlin, Moscow]

[Text] In view of the decline in production in vital sectors of the national economy and in order to prevent emergencies from occurring in the RSFSR power industry, transport, and housing and municipal amenities, I rule that:

1. As a temporary measure, an RSFSR government special commission is to be set up for the operational regulation of the provision of resources, comprising the following:

S.V. Anisimov, RSFSR minister of trade and material resources (commission chairman); V.M. Lopukhin, RSFSR minister of fuel and energy (commission deputy chairman); V.B. Yefimov, RSFSR transport minister (commission deputy chairman); S.K. Shoygu, chairman of the State Committee for Civil Defense Affairs, Emergencies, and the Elimination of the Aftermath of Natural Disasters under the RSFSR president; A.A. Titkin, RSFSR industry minister; Yu.G. Olkhovikov, RSFSR deputy minister of economics and finance; A.F. Poryadin, chairman of the Committee for Housing and Municipal Amenities and RSFSR first deputy minister of architecture, construction, and housing and municipal amenities; V.M. Kolesnikov, deputy chairman of the "Rosnefteprodukt" concern; I.S. Zemlyanushin, RSFSR deputy general prosecutor; V.V. Vitryanskiy, RSFSR deputy state arbitrator; and Yu.A. Polenov, deputy chairman of the RSFSR State Committee for Statistics.

2. The RSFSR government special commission for the operational regulation of the provision of resources is be instructed:

to organize day-to-day work to prevent the activities of the RSFSR fuel and energy and transport and highway complexes and housing and municipal amenities from being disrupted;

if necessary to reallocate fuel and other material and technical, resources, and also transport facilities needed to ensure the steady operation of the RSFSR fuel and energy and transport and highway complexes and housing and municipal amenities, by redistributing and mobilizing all available reserves;

to establish in conjunction with Councils of Ministers of republics in the RSFSR and organs of executive authority in krays, oblasts, and the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg restrictions on the consumption of fuel and energy by enterprises, with the social sphere having priority.

3. It is stipulated that for enterprises and organizations that have concluded economic contracts before 1 January 1992 at a level no lower than 95 percent of those concluded for 1991, taking into account deliveries for republic state needs in the volume set for 1992, the maximum level of expenditure on pay included in the cost of the product will be doubled.

4. It is stipulated that enterprises and supply and marketing organizations:

will be exempt from paying fines for underdelivering or defaulting on the delivery of products as a result of the reallocation of fuel and other material and technical resources, if the RSFSR government special commission for the operational regulation of the provision of resources so decides;

if they fail to carry out the decisions of the aforementioned RSFSR government special commission on supplies of products and on transport services they will pay a fine equivalent to the value of the unsupplied products and unprovided transport services, which will go to the RSFSR republic budget.

5. The heads of kray and oblast administrations are instructed to set up permanently operating groups for the 1991-92 winter period to adopt day-to-day measures to ensure the continuous operation of fuel supply, power, transport, and housing and municipal facilities and to provide liaison between these groups and the RSFSR government special commission set up in accordance with the present decree.

Councils of Ministers of republics in the RSFSR and executive organs of authority in krays, oblasts, and the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg are recommended to set up appropriate permanently operating groups.

6. It is stipulated that the decisions of the RSFSR government special commission on the operational regulation of the provision of resources are binding on the Councils of Ministers of the republics in the RSFSR and the organs of executive authority in krays, oblasts, and the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg, ministries, departments, concerns, and other associations, enterprises, and organizations.

If there is an emergency, organs of state power and administration are to consider proposals from the aforementioend special commission within 24 hours.

7. It is recommended that the RSFSR State Committee for Statistics provide the requisite statistical reports for the activities of the RSFSR government special commission for the operational regulation of the provision of resources as of 1 January 1992.

8. The present decree comes into effect from the moment it is signed.

RSFSR President B. Yeltsin.
The Kremlin, Moscow, 4 December 1991.

Yeltsin Issues Decree on State-Law Activities

PM1712152391 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

["Decree of the President of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic 'On State-Law Support for the RSFSR Government's Activities During Implementation of the Economic Reform'," dated 12 December 1991 at the Kremlin, Moscow]

[Text] In view of the need to establish a unified system of legal support for the RSFSR Government's activities during the implementation of the economic reform in the RSFSR, I rule that:

1. RSFSR State Counselor Sergey Mikhaylovich Shakhray be appointed deputy chairman of the RSFSR Government.

S.M. Shakhray is to be put in charge of questions of RSFSR state-law policy during the implementation of the economic reform and is to oversee the RSFSR Justice Ministry, the RSFSR Federal Security Agency, the RSFSR Internal Affairs Ministry, and the RSFSR State Committee for Nationalities Policy.

2. An RSFSR president's State-Law Administration is to be formed to provide juridical support for the preparation of decisions by the RSFSR president, including decisions on questions of RSFSR citizenship and pardons and RSFSR awards.

RSFSR Government Deputy Chairman S.M. Shakhray has two weeks to submit for approval a Provision on the RSFSR President's State-Law Administration, its general structure, and staffing.

RSFSR President B. Yeltsin
The Kremlin, Moscow, 12 December 1991

Yeltsin Assures Academy of Sciences Finances

LD1712183491 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" program]

[Text] The general meeting of the Russian Academy of Sciences opened in Moscow today. Correspondent V. Perfilyev reports:

This is the first meeting of the resurrected Academy of Sciences of Russia. Apart from academicians and corresponding members of the former USSR Academy of Sciences, its members now include scientists who have passed through Russian Academy of Sciences elections.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who addressed the meeting, assured the scientists that, even during the first 6-8 months of next year—the most difficult ones, he thinks—the republic's government will not abandon the priority of science and its financing. We will not be able to emerge from the crisis without highly qualified specialists and scientists, Boris Yeltsin stressed.

[Begin Yeltsin recording] What the Academy of Sciences of Russia will be like will, in no small measure, depends on the decisions that you are to adopt. After a gap of nearly 70 years, it is starting to function once again. It is an outstanding event in the Russian Federation. I want to congratulate you on it wholeheartedly. Historical justice is thereby restored. [Applause] The immense scientific potential of Russia is returned to our state, and will be used henceforth for the benefit of our people.

Now that gigantic transformations are taking place, it is vitally important to combine the efforts of all, and, above all, of politicians and scientists. Otherwise, no one will win. I am sure that you and I hold the same views on this vital matter. [end recording]

Appropriations Not Sufficient

LD1712133691 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1200 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] A general meeting of the Russian Academy of Sciences [RAS] opened in Moscow today. It was addressed by Boris Yeltsin. The president of Russia said, in part: Even during the first 6-8 months of 1992, the most difficult, the Government of Russia will not renounce the priority given to science and its funding. We will not be able, he stressed, to get out of crisis without highly- qualified specialists and scientists.

The leadership of Russia, which has undertaken to fund the research of the RAS over that period, will maintain appropriations at the level of the current year, the president said. However, in his words, that will not be sufficient. It is planned in the future to use other means of funding, specifically for specific priority programs. Special funds are also to be set up which any scientific researcher can apply to. There has to be constant contact between the leadership of the republic and scientific circles to get the most effective work.

The president of Russia focused on the main aspects of the country's political and economic life. The formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States will stop the process of disintegration, he said. It is possible that this is the last chance to save the country. It has to be safeguarded, for any confrontation would be ruinous.

In today's situation, Boris Yeltsin thinks, it is important not to lose the scientific and technical potential accumulated by the republic, because the revival of the RAS is one of the most important steps toward the revival of the Russian state.

President Elected

LD1712201291 Moscow TASS in English 1723 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Vernoika Romanenkova]

[Text] moscow December 17 TASS—Yuriy Osipov, 55, a scientist from Yekaterinburg known for his works in the field of mechanics and control processes, was elected president of the Russian Academy of Sciences today.

Voting took place at the general meeting of the Russian Academy of Sciences, which opened in Moscow on Tuesday [17 December] morning, with a total of 724 ballots cast in favour of Osipov.

In an exclusive interview with TASS straight after the results of voting were announced, Osipov said:

"The main thing for me now is to assess the present situation in Russian science and create conditions to avert its final collapse. Scientific collectives need support in order to survive under the market economy."

Rutskoy 'Attacks' on Yeltsin Team Examined

PM1812120591 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTIdiscrd in Russian 8 Dec 91 p 3

[Russian Humanitarian Association Analyst Sergey Novikov article under the "In the Country" rubric: "General Rutskoy on the Offensive"]

[Text] It seems that ominous premonitions on the eve of price liberalization in Russia are not just preying on the minds of ordinary people and representatives of the various economic schools, but are also aggravating the already complex situation in the Russian corridors of power. RSFSR Vice President A. Rutskoy's recent attacks on the team led by Yegor Gaydar, government deputy chairman for questions of economic policy, prompt us to draw these very conclusions. During Aleksandr Rutskoy's meetings with defense enterprise representatives from Novosibirsk and Barnaul last week, the new economic reform cabinet was accused of being incompetent and lacking "experience of practical reform."

It is possible that this statement by the vice president does not merit becoming the subject of an independent analysis. However, the situation prevailing in the country gives it special significance and prevents us from interpreting it as merely the next phase in a back-stage struggle, or as the unsophisticated utterance of a combat general who has little experience of palace intrigues and wholly supports the people.

It is obvious that the situation prevailing in Russia three months after the collapse of the putsch does not augur well for democratic forces. They have simply failed to create a stable sociopolitical base for their authority during this time, and today, on the eve of implementing the reforms, the trust enjoyed by the "White House" until quite recently is diminishing catastrophically. Society, tired of this state of permanent ambiguity and instability, is instinctively drawn toward the "firm hand" which is capable of bringing order to the state and halting its further uncontrollable disintegration.

Increasingly widespread rumors about a new and imminent coup this winter—this time a purely military one—are the direct consequence of such feelings. The logic of the evolution of the country's situation renders it imperative to take such a version of the development of events seriously. It is reinforced not only by the growing centrifugal tendencies in Russia but also by plans for radical cutbacks in the Armed Forces. Thus, all the indications are that if the current situation leading to the collapse of the state persists, the only real contenders for power in the country will be the military circles and the military-industrial complex.

In this context, A. Rutskoy's recent address to military-industrial complex leaders in Novosibirsk criticizing the economic reform cabinet, and the threat voiced in Barnaul that he would resign unless radical changes are introduced in the government, could be perceived as a serious bid to become leader and representative of the "new order." The vice president's assets also include his service record and his reputation as an advocate of a "strong and indivisible" Russia, which were clearly revealed during the Chechen crisis. He could also count on political support by all parties and groups—irrespective of political color—which place the preservation of a united and mighty Russia at the head of their list of priorities. The recent televised speech by Nikolay Travkin, leader of the Democratic Party of Russia, confirms this.

The emergence of just such an influential center of power in the higher echelons of RSFSR political power could lead to Ye. Gaydar's team yielding to a "firm hand" government propped by the vice president and his potential allies.

It would be all well and good if A. Rutskoy's actions do not lead to an acute crisis of executive power and the disintegration of the top Russian leadership. In this case, the current vice president's role as the mouthpiece of the Russian military-industrial complex and military circles, both of which have renounced Communist mythology, and also of the national-patriotic forces could, to some extent, prove useful insofar as it places their actions within a civilized framework and could stave off anti-constitutional moves. However, this will only be possible if A. Rutskoy retains his current post, even if the vice president's occasional emotional outbursts and uncontrolled utterances put the other members of B. Yeltsin's team and even the president himself in an awkward position. A. Rutskoy's resignation, in other words his actual switch to the opposition, could sharply limit the chances of positively influencing the vice president.

A clear answer to all these questions will emerge in the near future. B. Yeltsin's silence on this score indicates

that the president would like to define his position according to the situation and, at this moment in time, does not want to narrow his chances for political maneuvering. Obviously he will do everything he can over the next few days to defuse the possible crisis in his team. However, under the circumstances, events of the last few days show that the situation in Russia—especially among politically active forces—is entering a qualitatively new stage which is characterized by the collapse of old coalitions and alliances, and the accelerated formation of new ones.

Deputy Chairman Shakhray Holds News Conference

Economic Program, Popov Viewed

LD1812003191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1836 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Yuriy Vdovin]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS)—"The Central Asian Republics may become cofounders of a new agreement, and the Russian Federation will not impede such a decision," Sergey Shakhray, deputy chairman of the Russian Government, told a news conference today.

On the forthcoming economic reforms, Shakhray noted that a draft is ready in connection with the forthcoming implementation of the law on privatization and on the delimitation of items of property. "Russia also has a new program for restoring the economy, versions of which have been tested at the level of mathematical models," Shakhray noted.

Regarding the resignation of Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov, the deputy chairman of the Russian Government, said that, on the one hand, he regards this as an erroneous step and, on the other, as logical because, after all, the capital's executive authorities "have lost their way" and there is nothing left for Popov but "to leave the stage." Sergey Shakhray also noted that the mayor's resignation is in no way linked to the Russian Government's lack of support for the city's reforms.

[Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian at 1630 GMT on 17 December adds that Shakhray was introduced at the news conference as "Russian Government deputy chairman for legal affairs" and that he is in charge of the Justice Ministry and the State Committee of Nationalities Policy. Asked about the document to be signed at Alma-Ata, Shakhray reportedly replied that it is the same text of the agreement signed in Minsk, but that there might be "reservations" with ratification of the document by republican parliaments. Shakhray also reportedly stressed that price liberalization "cannot be postponed any more" in light of the Alma-Ata meeting.]

Gorbachev, Commonwealth Addressed

LD1712234291 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2119 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] USSR Supreme Soviet actually ceased to exist, Sergey Shakhray, Russian administration deputy chairperson, stated on December 17.

Addressing a press conference in Moscow, the deputy chair-person of Russian administration Sergey Shakhray also touched upon the subsequent political destiny of Mikhail Gorbachev: You can't conserve the position of president of a non-existing state, Sergey Shakhray stated. At the same time in the course of Gorbachev's dialogue with the independent states' community members one can find mutually acceptable options for his subsequent political destiny.

Speaking of the forthcoming meeting of the heads of 12 states in Alma-Ata 21 December, Shakhray stated that Russia had no objections against recognition of Kazakhstan and the Central Asian republics as founders of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]. It is expected to adopt a resolution legally sealing their membership of the CIS in Alma-Ata. They will also have talks on the signing of a military accord.

Shakhray dismissed the suggestion that the joining of the Asian states to the CIS could put off the freeing of prices in Russia.

Shakhray denied that Gavriil Popov's intention to resign from the position of the mayor of Moscow was connected with the lack of support on the part of Russian top-ranking executives of the drafts of reforms proposed by Moscow mayor's office. According to Shakhray, the president of Russia did everything possible for the implementation of those reforms in Moscow. Shakhray opines that the resignation has been caused by the fact that Popov has gotten mixed up in his contradictions with Mossoviet [Moscow Soviet] which takes decisions that are the direct opposite of the mayor's rulings.

Shakhray reported that he had been instructed to form a state legal department under the Russian Federation president. Being deputy chair-person of the Russian administration, Shakhray is in charge of the Ministry of Justice, the Federal Security Agency, the Interior Ministry and the RSFSR State Committee for Ethnic Policies. Shakhray spoke in favour of gradual implementation of reforms in the security structures for, as he put it, haste might cause an explosion inside those structures.

Touching upon the stand taken by Russia's Administration as regards the subsequent destiny of Honecker, Shakhray stated that it was not expected to resort to force in order to expel him from this country or from the territory of the Chilian Embassy in Moscow. Shakhray stated that the Honecker issue should be tackled by purely legal and peaceful means.

Shakhray Interviewed on New Commonwealth

OW1812044791 Moscow Central Television First Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 2000 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Interview with Sergey Shakhray, State Adviser for legal questions; by Sergey Lomakin; from the "Utro" program]

[Text] [Lomakin] It is with pleasure that I introduce another guest of our studio, actually a man who needs no introduction since he is known well enough. He is Sergey Mikhaylovich Shakhray, and I am not afraid to state that he is one of the authors of the agreement signed near Minsk by the presidents of the three republics.

Sergey Mikhaylovich, a session of the Russian parliament opens today. The main issue is probably the ratification of this agreement, and Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, the Russian president, is supposed to speak there. What do you think, what arguments in support of the agreement will he present to the parliament members?

[Shakhray] I hope that the words "good morning" will really be a good omen for this day. I suppose that the president of the Russian Federation will address the deputies of the Supreme Soviet with the motives, reasons, and explanations for the signing of the agreement in Minsk, analyze the situation in which the agreement was signed, and ask the Supreme Soviet to ratify the agreement, especially since the parliaments of the Ukrainian and Belarussian republics have already ratified this agreement unanimously.

The main reason for this agreement was actually the situation under which the agreement arose—both in practical and legal terms, the USSR had ceased to exist in its previous form. But the heads of the republics did not start writing: we are dissolving, we are disbanding the Soviet Union. They drew the line, faced the fact of disintegration, and instead of scattering to their homes in their own nations or drawing up borders or dividing up arms, they said: Well, we still must live on, together, after all we are fraternal nations, with a common history of many centuries. So they proposed a political formula for the cooperative, continued coexistence of the nations. What's more, it is an open formula. I would say that it is a political formula for economic reform. Neither force nor dictatorship can restore the situation; only radical economic reform and a willingness to live together in friendship will.

I want to say that after the agreement was signed, it started working almost right away. The tactics and strategy of the economic reform were coordinated. The Russian Federation had to accept this and make a very difficult economic decision by changing the starting date of the reform to 2 January. This left the holiday intact. However, the Ukraine and Belarus, which understood the importance of this decision, took upon themselves additional responsibilities. The Ukraine has already started sending foodstuffs to Russia—which means that the agreement works, that we have started living in a new stage.

[Lomakin] Sergey Mikhaylovich, some time ago, in April of this year I think, Solzhenitsyn—who had his 73rd birthday yesterday—wrote an article titled "How To Organize Russia." You may remember it. He expressed the view that these three republics, these three great nations must be united, and establish the organization from that point on. So, do you confess to making use of Solzhenitsyn's idea, or did it come to you spontaneously, or was it worked on for a long time?

[Shakhray] I think that the factor which is sometimes advertised too much, the factor of a Slavic or an Orthodox union, has no bearing whatsoever in this case. Otherwise, it would have been mentioned; it would have been a union of the closed type. We Slavs would just protect each other, and to hell with everyone else. This is not what it is all about. It was precisely these republics that formed a union in 1922. There was a fourth republic at the time, the Transcaucasian Federation, but it ceased to exist as an independent state in 1936. It was precisely Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine that formed a union in 1922. Having formed the union, they did not lose their sovereignty. This was set down in each of the constitutions, including the last, the legendary one of 1977. While remaining sovereign states, they have full constitutional rights within the framework of existing constitutional norms, and on the basis of Article 72, which defined the right of free withdrawal as set down in the constitution, they also have the full constitutional right to decide whether they want to enter or join with this union, especially since the union has fallen apart, in legal and practical terms. So, constitutional norms were fully observed here. What is more, the agreement was signed by two popularly elected presidents empowered by their people, and by the chairman of the Belarussian Republic Supreme Council, that is, a man elected by the parliament. Having signed this agreement, the republics presented it to their parliaments for ratification. I can say that from a legal point of view, such tactics are virtually beyond reproach, and all efforts to accuse them of unconstitutionality or breach of law are made with the political motive of further increasing tensions, pushing the situation to the brink, and driving a wedge between Slavs and non-Slavs, and between zealous patriots and democrats. To be frank, many of these statements are made simply to serve the personal motive of preserving one's job and portfolio.

[Lomakin] Let us call a spade a spade. All these central organs and structures, including the union parliament—they are all concerned with what you have said, which is to save their positions. I understand that they have no place in this union?

[Shakhray] You know, the USSR Congress of People's Deputies ceased to exist on 5 September. Today's calls to convene an extraordinary congress are unconstitutional,

since legally, on the basis of laws adopted on 5 September, this organ no longer exists. To replace it during the transition period, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was established, and rightly so. This organ should have played the role of a buffer during the transition period.

Today, however, when the Republic of the Ukraine and the delegations of several other republics are missing at the USSR Supreme Soviet, and when they are absent from the State Soviet, who do these organs represent? Can it play the role of an initiator, announcing the new union in the name of all of the Soviet Union, or in the name all the former republics of the Union? Of course not...

[Lomakin, interrupting] Of course not.

[Shakhray] And the Supreme Soviet, which has been created by the republics' parliaments, has no deputies from the Ukraine, and Belarus has recalled its deputies. So what do we have here? There are two delegations, mainly elected on the territory of the Russian Federation. Some wear the badge of the People's Deputy of the Union and sit in the Kremlin, some wear a badge of the Russian People's Deputy, and sit in the White House, adopting various decisions. This is madness, this is a duality of power.

[Lomakin] Yes, this is absurd. Sergey Mikhaylovich, since we touched upon questions of central authority, what do you think: Should there be any central organs in this commonwealth, some interrepublican organs that would deal with some of the key questions? How is it to be?

[Shakhray] You know, the word "center" has become so odious that there will be no central organs, not just because of the sound of the word. There is talk about creating coordinating institutions along the lines of the Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs. There would be a Ukrainian foreign minister, a foreign minister of the Republic of Belarus, of Russia, of Kazakhstan, and other republics which, I am sure, will join the Union. They will coordinate external political activity.

[Lomakin] Does this mean that every republic will have its own foreign policy while coordinating its foreign policy actions with the coordinating council?

[Shakhray] Undoubtedly. Every republic will be an independent subject under international law, an independent and sovereign state. They are not creating a new state, they are creating a commonwealth which will act on an international level only within the plenary powers granted by the republics. Another thing is coordination, undoubtedly, the coordination of political measures and steps.

[Lomakin] And another question, Sergey Mikhaylovich. From what I hear, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, the president of the USSR, will speak at today's session. What do you predict he will do? From some things that he has said, his position regarding this agreement, this union, is clear. What action can the president of the country take?

[Shakhray] It is difficult for me to assume the role of a soothsayer. True, he did make pronouncements about an extraordinary session and some other steps, and on unconstitutionality. I would like to point out that this formula does not exclude the president of the USSR as a political figure, as a commander in chief of the Armed Forces. I personally would like to think that the most natural reaction would be to congratulate these republics, to express official support, to invite other Union republics to join this commonwealth, and start coordination between them, instead of trying to preserve the old structures. Then, the political role and the prestige of such a person would be maintained, although I think that he is an outstanding political figure. The mistake, possibly of historic proportions, and not only his but also of many others, was to destroy the CPSU-KGB backbone of the old Union without trying to create anything to replace it. Instead, one could create either some kind of a similar hierarchical, semi-military organization—which is not realistic—or launch radical economic reform. Economic interests, openness of borders, freedom of enterprise, and equal rights of citizens and private entrepreneurs—all of these would have revived the Union, thus making it an even more powerful nation, much more powerful than if it had been built on the basis of military power, military potential.

[Lomakin] Thank you, Sergey Mikhaylovich. And one last question, a very short one, with an equally short answer please. What do you think: have we overcome the political crisis in our country as a result of the signing of this agreement?

[Shakhray] We now we have hope of overcoming it.

[Lomakhin] Thank you. In this case I think we should all congratulate ourselves for overcoming the political crisis, or for our efforts, or the first step towards overcoming it. We hope the crisis will be overcome in spite of everything, and our country will endure, our state will prevail.

Thank you, Sergey Mikhaylovich. I will repeat once more that our guest was Sergey Mikhaylovich Shakhray, a state adviser for legal matters. Thank you.

Brannikov 'Refused' Decree on Troop Transfer

LD1712164991 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1000 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "New Wave" program]

[Text] Uncontrolled squandering of the Kremlin's property has begun in connection with the USSR's disintegration. This was stated by RSFSR Minister of Internal Affairs Andrey Dunayev. He informed members of the presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet that USSR

Minister of Internal Affairs Viktor Barannikov refused to carry out a decree on the transfer of Interior Ministry troops to RSFSR jurisdiction without a relevant instruction from Mikhail Gorbachev.

Minister Chubays on Slow Pace of Privatization

PM1812115691 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[V. Kononenko report on 16 December press conference by Russian Minister A. Chubays: "Prices Will Have To Be Released Without Privatization"]

[Text] The government cannot consider the process of privatization in Russia to be satisfactory in terms of its pace, scale, and forms. It is going too slowly, and this applies first and foremost to state and municipal enterprises, RSFSR Minister A. Chubays, chairman of the State Committee for Management of State Property, stated at a press conference 16 December.

One of the main reasons for this situation is the lack of a normative base, that is, a mechanism for privatization. The committee's expert groups, with the participation of specialists from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank, are currently preparing a package of such documents. By the end of the week the documents will be sent for examination by the government. On the other hand, we are worried about the gross violations of the Law on Privatization. A typical example: Shares in an enterprise are offered according to a preplanned pattern: So many shares will go to the labor collective, the organization concerned, the state—whereas the law stipulates free sales of shares. Or take the Moscow City Hall decision on the privatization of housing. As I understand it, T. Popov and L. Piyasheva consider the main problem to be how to launch this process as quickly as possible, regardless of the law. Piyasheva says that the laws have never been observed in Russia. This approach will end up discrediting the whole idea of privatization.

When IZVESTIYA's correspondent asked what the state privatization program will look like and whether it is possible to introduce free prices without large-scale privatization, the minister's answer was as follows: The state programs for 1992 in this sphere are being drawn up. We are not aiming to draw up a list of facilities that can be bought up. But we are defining criteria according to which the local organs should decide which facilities in a particular sphere should be put up for sale.

As for a linkage between privatization questions and price liberalization, this is impossible. The price chaos has now broken the commodity production chain and the stores are empty. Even the two-week delay with prices is a very difficult decision for the Russian Government. If we were to act on the demands that large-scale privatization and demonopolization of the national economy should be carried out first, which will take about five years at least, then the economy would simply collapse.

Medicines, Raw Materials Shortages Reported

PM1812100591 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1800 GMT 14 Dec 91

[From the "Vesti" newscast: Report by G. Fadeyeva, A. Kornilov, identified by caption]

[Text] [Fadeyeva] In our times of universal shortages, we have become used to all sorts of things, but empty pharmacy shelves are simply too much! This is on a par with casualty department physicians going on strike!

Ivan Ivanovich, how do you, as director of a pharmaceutics enterprise, explain the current general shortage of medicines?

[I. Tyulyayev] More than 1,000 different types of raw materials and some 10,000 different types of auxiliary materials are used in the production of our medicines alone. If all the enterprises in our country unconditionally fulfilled all their obligations to the medical industry, there would be enough medicines.

[Fadeyeva] Because of the shortage of raw materials, the shortfall in the production of medicines will total around 2 billion rubles by the end of the year. In the light of this figure, another figure immediately looks much less impressive. The Russian Government has earmarked 1.35 billion foreign currency rubles for combating the medicine shortages. But will this money be used wisely?

[Tyulyayev] It is necessary to make use of the available capacities in our country and in our sector for the production of finished medicines, rather than buying the finished products abroad. They cost three, five, and ten times as much.

[Fadeyeva] The "Akrikhin" Enterprise has long been applying this principle in its cooperation with Yugoslav, French, and U.S. companies. It produces the finished drugs from their semi-finished products. It is up to 500 percent more cost-effective to use foreign currency in this way.

Poll on Attitudes Toward Ex-Union Republics

OW1812090391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0706 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's relations with the former Union republics are based on the principles of mutual respect and equality, most of the respondents said during the opinion poll held in December by the National Public Opinion Studies Centre. The opinion poll involved 1,005 respondents from 14 Russian cities in different parts of the republic, Data agency reports.

Sixteen percent of those polled believe that Russia is making unjustified concessions to other republics.

Russia has no clear-cut position, said 14 percent of the respondents.

One tenth of those polled accused the Russian leaders of trying to impose their will on other republics.

Thirteen percent of the respondents found it difficult to state their opinion.

The possible error stood at 3 percent.

The same opinion poll revealed that 39 percent of Russia's citizens would like to have fire arms.

Fifty one percent of those polled said they did not need any.

One tenth of the respondents were undecided.

Afghan Veterans' 'Ultimatum' to Leadership

PM1712160791 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 17 Dec 91 p 2

[V. Kazakov report: "Ultimatum From 'Afghans'"]

[Text] The extraordinary congress of the Russian Union of Afghan Veterans [RUAV] has completed its work in Barnaul. The congress reelected the RUAV Board headed by Chairman Yevgeniy Lyapin, who immediately said that he was leaving the organization and urged delegates to follow his example. However, he left the congress hall alone.

After discussing the attempt to split the movement, the "Afghans" declared their unity. It was also said that the country's leadership, using internationalist soldiers to attain its own political ends, has once again cast them to the arbitrary will of fate. Benefits to participants in the war have still not placed on a legal footing. The congress adopted an appeal to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and to Russian President B. Yeltsin demanding that the movement's most pressing questions be resolved forthwith. The congress said that in the event of refusal or reluctance to tackle the problems facing the "Afghans," the RUAV reserves the right to choose the means to achieve these tasks.

Delegates backed a similar appeal from the mothers of soldiers who died in Afghanistan. The new RUAV Board was elected. It is headed by Aleksandr Kotenev.

Regional Affairs

Moscow Council Chairman on Popov Resignation

LD1812021291 Moscow TASS in English 1328 GMT 18 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Galina Sugak]

[Text] Moscow December 17 TASS—Moscow City Council (Mossovet) Chairman Nikolay Gonchar believes that Gavriil Popov's statement about his resignation from the post of the mayor of Moscow was prompted by personal grievances.

Popov has again recalled the old grievances precisely at this moment after a number of documents that are of importance to the capital have been jointly signed and, pleading differences with the deputies' corps, is resigning his post, Gonchar told TASS.

A privatisation decision which suits both Mossovet and the mayor's office has been adopted. It was worked out and elaborated jointly, Gonchar said.

"One gathers the impression that it is precisely the normalisation of relations between the mayor's office and Mossovet that served as a ground for resignation. What Popov needs is a conflict. Cooperation does not suit him," the Mossovet chief said.

Government Appeals to Yeltsin

LD1712222291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2100 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] The government of Moscow has called on the capital's mayor, Gavriil Popov, not to resign from office, reports the Russian Information Agency. The government has appealed to Boris Yeltsin, president of Russia, to meet Gavriil Popov.

Moscow Oblast Fund To Finance 'Necessities'

LD1712224491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Text] According to a report by the KURANTY newspaper, the administration of Moscow Oblast is taking urgent measures to provide its inhabitants with foodstuffs and industrial goods. The government of Moscow Oblast has decided to form a fund for the stabilization of the consumer market, on a scale of 10 percent of the output of all enterprises sited on the territory of the oblast.

In order to fill the empty shelves, the administration intends to conclude contracts for the supply of output, primarily with oblast trade consumer organizations. The stabilization fund will be used for barter deals. In exchange for dump trucks, mineral fertilizers, and construction materials, Moscow Oblast will receive butter, sugar, and other foods—vital necessities, which will possibly include vodka.

N. Ossetia 'Extraordinary Status' To Continue

OW1812040491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1705 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The extraordinary status in the suburban region of Northern Ossetia and the city of Vladikavkaz has been extended until February 19th, 1992. The North Ossetian Supreme Soviet passed this decision with regard to the continuing tense situation in the region. The Ingush, who mainly live in neighboring Checheno-Ingushetia, are

demanding the return of this region and the right bank of Vladikavkaz, from which they were deported in 1944.

The extraordinary status was introduced in the region April 20, 1991, and has continued ever since.

Situation 'Extremely Tense'

LD1712221991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Video report from Vladikavkaz by correspondent O. Doyev—from the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] A North Ossetia Supreme Soviet session took place in Vladikavkaz today. It extended the state of emergency regime in Prigorodnyy Rayon and in the republic's capital.

[Doyev] This was to be expected. The situation in the republic still remains extremely tense. The timing of a crusade against North Ossetia, sometimes peaceful, at other times not peaceful, which the Ingush leader in Nazran has been declaring, not for the first time, is keeping the whole population in a state of constant tension. In fact, the tension has developed into an oppressive worry, and the empty shelves in the shops do not seem to be the greatest misfortune today.

The main question is how to defend yourself and your family. A republican guard and self-defense detachments have been set up in Ossetia. Clearly, a show of force is not the best means of self- assertion, but what else is there to do? The people of North Ossetia are still prepared to tackle all problems through negotiation. May God grant that they begin! But the hope of a peaceful outcome is diminishing.

Ossetian, Kabard People's Congresses End

PM1812113191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Ali Kazikhanov report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Congresses Held Back-to-Back"]

[Text] Vladikavkaz—The Ossetian People's Congress has finished in Vladikavkaz, and the Kabard Peoples' Congress has also come to an end in Nalchik.

The Ossetian Congress decided to consolidate the people's forces by not relying on the center and by taking the business of looking after itself into its own hands. Yusup Soslanbekov, chairman of the parliament of the Confederation of Caucasus Mountain Peoples, requested delegates to no longer identify the Ingush people with the Chechens, who had chosen their own path of development. The congress discussed the unscheduled question of the reunification of North and South Ossetia within Russia.

The Kabard Peoples' Congress, "while respecting the Balkar people's right to self-determination," nevertheless considered the step of proclaiming a Republic of Balkaria to be ill-prepared, economically and politically ill-considered, and conducive to a worsening of interethnic relations.

The congress, it is believed in Kabardino-Balkaria, is a natural reaction of concern felt by the Kabard, Russian, and other peoples together with the Cossack community and caused by the Balkars' recent proclamation of statehood, which came as a surprise to everyone. The delegates called on the fraternal people to heed the opinion of other peoples and reconsider its separatist step.

Because of significant migration observed recently, the congress supported the decision by the Supreme Soviet of the Kabardino-Balkar SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] to limit registrations in cities and villages.

Daghestan Decides To Join Commonwealth

LD1712210991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Video report from Makhachkala, Daghestan, by unidentified correspondent—from the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] [Announcer] Here is another report from the North Caucasus: Daghestan will join the Commonwealth of Independent States as an integral part of the Russian Federation. This was declared at a session of the republic's Supreme Soviet, which has started work in Makhachkala.

[Correspondent] The opening of the session today began with a discussion on the socio-political situation in the republic. In this connection, mention was made of the attitude of the Republic of Daghestan toward the Commonwealth of Independent States.

[M. Magomedov, chairman of Supreme Soviet of Daghestan Republic] The Republic of Daghestan will find its place within the Commonwealth as an integral part of the Russian Federation.

[Correspondent] There are 18 urgent matters on the agenda. Above all, there is the problem of alleviating the crime situation, and a staffing question, since public movements are sharply calling for a government of popular trust to be created. Consideration will be given to a draft law on referenda in the Daghestan Republic.

Chairman Zotin Elected Mari Republic President

PM1812094591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Alyans Sabirov report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Mari Republic Elects President"]

[Text] Yoshkar-Ola—Vladislav Zotin, incumbent chairman of the Mari SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet, has been elected the republic's first president.

The first round of elections brought victory for none of the three contenders. It is worth noting that the smallest number of votes was garnered by the candidate put forward by the democratic forces. But it seems that what excites voters is not so much the word "democrat" as the extent of their interest in a man's specific action program. Especially his economic program.

Central Electoral Commission Chairman R. Popov reports that 65.8 percent of registered voters took part in the second round of elections held 14 December. The population of the cities of Volzhsk and Kozmodemyansk was the most apathetic. But there was a fairly high turn-out in Yoshkar-Ola and the regions. A total of 58.9 percent of voters who took part in the election cast their votes for Parliament Chairman V. Zotin.

Yakut Republic Imposes Restrictions on Exports

PM1812120891 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, RIA, REUTER column]

[Text] Restrictions have been temporarily imposed on the export of food, furs, timber, coal, and certain other goods and raw materials from the Yakut-Sakha SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic].

The republic Council of Ministers was forced to resort to this step, being the last in the region to do so. The export of natural resources will continue only on a quota basis, on license from the republic government.

Yakutia To Transfer Gold, Diamonds to Treasury

PM1812093991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Dec 91 Union Edition p 7

[V. Georgiyevskiy report: "Yakutia Gives Diamonds and Gold to Independent Russia"]

[Text] Mikhail Nikolayev, chairman of the Yakutskaya-Sakha Republic Supreme Soviet, has handed the "Free Russia" diamond to RSFSR President Boris Yeltsin.

This 241.8 carat diamond of astounding purity was extracted 28 September at the "Yakutzoloto" Association's Aykhalskiy Ore Dressing Combine. The Yakutskaya-Sakha Republic Supreme Soviet Presidium has named the unique diamond "Free Russia" and decided to transfer it for permanent storage to the RSFSR State Fund because of the special credit due to the RSFSR for defending the democratic transformations in the country.

Answering questions put to him by IZVESTIYA's correspondent, Yakutsk Parliament Head M. Nikolayev said notably:

"Not just the diamonds, but also the gold that is mined on our republic's territory will henceforth be transferred to the Russian treasury. That is Yakutia's contribution to the acquisition of our common independence and prosperity. Next year will be the 360th anniversary of our people's becoming part of Russia. We have survived bad times together and we will continue to live together and move toward democracy."

Altay To 'Significantly Raise' Gold Output

LD1712225191 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1906 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Domestic Market" section]

[Text] Altay region administration is going to significantly raise the current gold output level (460 kg per annum) Mrs Valentina Kolesova, deputy head of the Altay region administration, declared December 16 at a meeting with heads of the Altay regional gold-mining enterprises. Experts assess that valuable metals output level can be now raised through processing the wastes of the former gold mines, including those used for road-building and industrial construction, Kolesova said. According to her words, part of the profit received from the gold-mining can remain in the region. Kolesova also said that this week local structures of the customs and the RSFSR Foreign Ministry are planned to be opened in Altay region, which were to be set up in October this year.

The regional administration has turned down attempts of a number of the Japanese firms to buy the wastes of the old gold mines for a further processing, Anatoliy Muravlev, press-secretary of the administration told PF [POSTFACTUM].

Vologda Food Situation, Prices Stabilizing

PM1812111691 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Correspondent A. Solovyev report under the general heading: "Moscow and Petersburg Will Get Help From the West and Vologda"]

[Text] Vologda—The Vologda peasants will resume deliveries of meat and dairy products to Moscow and St. Petersburg in January.

A month has passed since the increase in purchase prices for meat and dairy products and vodka in Vologda Oblast, which IZVESTIYA reported in November. The people of Vologda are beginning to recover from the shock that still lies ahead for inhabitants of neighboring oblasts. In Vologda the protests against the administration, which took action anticipating the Russian Government by six weeks, are now dying down. Representatives of 26 political parties and public movements, meeting at the oblast soviet in mid-December, although they were less than delighted at the administration's initial steps, did not set themselves up in opposition.

The food situation is stabilizing. The people of Vologda are not in danger of starvation, as was the case at the

beginning of November when some 70 percent of livestock products were going out of the oblast. The peasants now have no reason to sell meat and milk outside: They can get the same price at home. There are fewer interruptions in the work of meat combines and dairies. There are more complaints about the city trade system, which does not take all the output prepared for sale by the processing enterprises. Waiting lines have not disappeared in the food stores, but administration head N. Podgornov is already talking about the possible lifting of rationing...

"I think in January we will resume deliveries of meat and dairy products to Moscow and St. Petersburg"—he said that too.

Taking care of its own survival, the oblast temporarily stopped sending produce to those cities, supplying only the "closed facilities," including military units stationed on its territory.

But no one can survive in isolation. And the people of Vologda are no exception. They supplement their food stores with "other people's" products (grain, sugar, vegetable oil, and so forth), exchanging them for products coming into the oblast's stocks from industrial enterprises (10-percent contributions), primarily the Cherepovetsk Metallurgical Combine. Many industrialists are joining the oblast leaders in the endeavor to obtain food.

They managed to get over the state of shock relatively calmly, mainly because restrictions on wage increases were lifted in good time and measures were taken to ensure social protection for people.

So that the noble intentions did not remain merely on paper, it was necessary to seek sources for rapidly increasing the budget. And they found them. First, of course, contributions from the producers' profits, plus the income from the privatization of enterprises (though the main revenue from this still lies ahead). The gaps in the budget were also filled by trebling the price of vodka, by obtaining money for timber shipped out of the oblast, and by increasing prices for the gravel, sand, and other natural materials that are extracted here.

Kuzbass Miners Declare 'Prestrike Status'

PM1712143191 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

["Own Information" report: "Kuzbass Warning"]

[Text] The Council of Representatives of the Kuzbass Miners' Independent Trade Union [KMITU] has warned RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman R.I. Khasbulatov that it is declaring "prestrike status" as of 15 December. While aware of all the complexities of the transition to the market and aware that the difficulties are the price of decades of incompetent and criminal leadership of the country, the Council of Representatives believes that officials of Russian state bodies at various levels are using the problems of the transition to the market as a cover for efforts to shift these problems onto working people's shoulders.

The RSFSR Government, the document goes on to say, is infringing the rights of the newly created trade union associations, in particular the Miners' Independent Trade Union.

"In view of this, guided by the decisions of the founding congress, the Council of Representatives of the KMITU urgently proposes that RSFSR President B.N. Yeltsin hold a meeting with representatives of the Russian Miners' Independent Trade Union and other Russian free trade unions before 15 January 1992.

"We demand that the organs of republic executive power, oblast and city administrations, and leaders of ministries and departments, associations, institutions, and other organizations:

"1. Strictly observe existing legislation;

"2. Revoke all existing resolutions and legally binding acts (instructions) that infringe the rights of free trade unions in Russia, in particular the Miners' Independent Trade Union."

The appeal is signed by S. Sharipov, chairman of the KMITU.

Bashkir Calls for 'Patience, Wisdom, and Calm'

PM1812095791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Aleksandr Zinovyev report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Citizens, The Most Important Thing Is To Remain Calm"]

[Text] Ufa—The Bashkir media have published an appeal to the republic's citizens from the Bashkir SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet Presidium and Council of Ministers.

This document makes it clear that the reason for its appearance is the difficult political and economic situation which has developed in the country recently. The Bashkortostan leadership called upon workers, kolkhoz workers, the intelligentsia, young people, social associations, movements and parties, the clergy, war and labor veterans, and people's deputies to remain calm and restrained, and urged them to do everything to facilitate normal operations and to maintain continued stability in the republic. The appeal states: "At this alarming time we hope that all republic citizens will show patience, wisdom, and calm, and the industriousness so characteristic of our people. Only together can we withstand the difficulties lying ahead on the road to the market."

Kursk Deputy Poll 'Ended in Total Disarray'

PM1812093791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Vladimir Kulagin report under "Direct Line" rubric: "Tired of Politics?"]

[Text] Kursk—Elections for a new Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic people's deputy in the Kursk National-Territorial District No. 52 have ended in total disarray.

The voting paper for the secret ballot listed nine candidates from various parties and social groups. However, over half of the electorate ignored the elections. Thus, out of 302,000 registered voters in the oblast center only 55,000 went to the polls to cast their vote. In another major oblast city—Zheleznogorsk—only one in five voters cast their vote.

The district electoral commission declared the elections invalid. No date has yet been set for repeat elections. It is possible that they will not take place at all.

Tatar President Meets Businessmen in Vienna

OW1812035291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Mintimer Shaymiyev, president of Tatarstan, has stayed in Vienna since Monday [16 December] holding talks with Western businessmen on giving credits to his republic and establishing new business contacts with it.

The Vienna talks opened early in December, when a number of petrochemical industry agreements were concluded between Tatarstan and Austria.

Mr. Shaymiyev is discussing GENERAL MOTORS's possible involvement in the construction of an automobile-assembly works in Yelabuga and whether Tatarstan can obtain some credits for purchasing food and sophisticated agricultural technologies from the West.

Mr. Shaymiyev told IF [INTERFAX] that "the credits in question are expected to be sufficiently large to ensure Tatarstan's smooth transition to a market-led economy."

Tatarstan, Yugoslav Firm Sign 5-Year Contract

OW1812060291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1927 GMT 18 Dec 91

[From the "Soviet Business Report"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Yugoslavia's Montex has started work on a number of major projects—whose total value is about $2 bn [billion]—in Tatarstan, a coal-mining republic on the Volga. Of these projects, construction of a margarine plant is already underway.

The general contract between the Yugoslav firm and the government of Tatarstan, signed at the end of September and scheduled to run for five years, calls for Montex to participate in the building of an asphalt plant, a plant to produce reinforced concrete and 10 brick factories. It will also help set up facilities for the food- processing industry: a cheese factory, and baby food plant (daily output: 15 tons) and a dairy plant (150 tons of milk per day). Most of these plants will be operated as joint ventures.

The Yugoslav side will provide credits for all the projects, with the total amount being lent to Tatarstan reaching some $2 bn [billion], according to the contract. It is not excluded that some of Tatarstan's debts can be paid off in Soviet rubles, with the Yugoslav side being given the right to invest the money on the territory of the USSR.

Supreme Soviet

Further on Union Parliament Property 'Seizure'

Control of Union Accounts Ordered

LD1712122191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1125 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Agabekov]

[Excerpt] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS)—This morning the red flag was lowered from one of the buildings in the Kremlin. This fact aroused rumors in the capital that the building had been "seized" by the Russian Supreme Soviet. The rumors were also fuelled by a report by the INTERFAX agency on a draft decision presented yesterday to the Presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet in accordance with which the Russian parliament is deemed the rightful successor to all buildings, structures, enterprises, organizations, health, medical and other institutions belonging to the USSR Supreme Soviet.

This decision, according to Russian Internal Affairs Minister Andrey Dunayev, was made because "this property is already being squandered". The Central Bank and the Russian Ministry of Economics and Finances have been directed to take control of all rubles and freely convertible currency held in USSR Supreme Soviet accounts within 24 hours.

It is not a case of the seizure of property, rather of its transfer, for which a liquidation commission has been set up, the TASS correspondent was told at the press center of the Russian Supreme Soviet. [passage omitted]

Khasbulatov Denies Disbandment

LD1712134391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1255 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS) - The fate of the union parliament in the light of the setting up of the Community of Independent States was discussed today at a meeting in the Russian "White House" between leaders of the Russian Supreme Soviet and the chairman of the chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

According to what Anuar Alimzhanov, chairman of the Soviet of the Republics of the USSR Supreme Soviet, told journalists, during the meeting, Ruslan Khasbulatov, head of the Russian parliament, denied a report on Radio "Liberty" and certain other mass media that the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet had taken a decision to disband the union parliament.

However, continued Anuar Alimzhanov, we have been shown a decision by the Presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet on the property of the union parliament. We take the view that this issue must be resolved by constitutional means, avoiding methods involving force. "This property was acquired not only by the RSFSR," he stressed.

Recall of Union Deputies Detailed

LD1712202891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1935 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 17 December (TASS)—The RSFSR Supreme Soviet press center has officially distributed here an account of the decision "On some questions relating to the recall of groups of RSFSR deputies from the USSR Supreme Soviet" adopted by the Presidium of the Russian parliament on Monday [16 December].

The decision has been adopted in connection with the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States and its recognition by a number of other former Union republics, as well as with the abolition of the bodies of the former USSR on the territories of the member states of the Commomwealth, and on the basis of the RSFSR law "On Insuring the Economic Basis for RSFSR Sovereignty".

The decision instructs the relevant state bodies to insure the functioning and preservation of the buildings, constructions, enterprises, and organizations formerly belonging to the USSR Supreme Soviet until decisions are made on their further use.

Vladimir Ryabov, chairman of the Soviet of the Republic of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, and Konstantin Lubenchenko, chairman of the Soviet of the Union of the USSR Supreme Soviet, are to jointly prepare proposals for the composition of the liquidation commission and on the use of the property of the USSR Supreme Soviet, including that situated on the territory of the Moscow Kremlin, and also proposals on insuring fulfillment of the status of USSR people's deputy by those elected on the territory of the RSFSR.

The decision comes into force from the moment of its adoption.

TASS was told at the RSFSR Supreme Soviet press center that the decision by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium "On some questions related to the recall of the groups of RSFSR people's deputies from the USSR Supreme Soviet" has given rise to a stream of the most contradictory reports in the mass media even before its official publication. In this connection the press center observed that as can be seen from a brief summary of the text of the decision, it is a question neither "of the arrest of the property of the USSR Supreme Soviet" nor of the "dissolution of the USSR Supreme Soviet," as certain radio stations have broadcast. The main purpose the RSFSR Supreme Soviet presidium was addressing in making the decision was to protect the property of the former Union parliament until the question of the fate of the USSR Supreme Soviet is resolved.

Resolution on Union Budget Law Adopted

LD1712221591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2100 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] The RSFSR Supreme Soviet has adopted a resolution on the procedure for putting into effect the Russian law on relations with the Union budget until the end of 1991. It states, among other things, that, on Russian territory, the operation of the Supreme Soviet's 3 December resolutions on USSR State Bank credits to finance all-Union expenditure in 1991 is suspended.

It is proposed that the USSR Supreme Soviet examine the possibilities of reducing Union budget spending for the fourth quarter of this year by no less than 15 percent, with a corresponding reduction in the budget deficit. This is regarded as an essential condition for the Russian Federation's participation in financing the joint spending of the Commonwealth member states.

The law will come into effect from the moment of its signing by the Russian president.

Interrepublic Affairs

Russia Welcomes Kazakh, Armenian Independence

LD1712234691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1936 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 17 Dec (TASS)—Russia recognized the independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan today. In a statement on this occasion, signed by Boris Yeltsin, belief in the necessity of a speedy promotion of new interstate relations between them is expressed. At the same time, the document says, independent Russia and Kazakhstan, cooperating in the international arena, will make an important contribution to the cause of strengthening peace and security on the Eurasian Continent.

On the same day Russia recognized the independence of the Republic of Armenia. Boris Yeltsin said that the development of new interstate relations between them is necessary; moreover, efforts guaranteeing human rights, fixed in international legal acts, will have an important

place in these relations. In the new conditions, independent Russia and Armenia, cooperating in the international arena and interacting in the whole range of bilateral ties, will make a notable contribution to the cause of strengthening peace and regional stability on the Eurasian Continent.

Commitments To Be Fulfilled

OW1712213491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Tuesday [17 December], the leaders of the Russian Federation recognized the independence of Armenia and Kazakhstan "in accordance with the choice of their peoples and parliaments".

The statements signed by Boris Yeltsin convey the Russian leaders' conviction that Russian-Armenian and Russian-Kazakhstan relations should be established without delay and developed on the basis of bilateral agreements and within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The statement on the recognition of Kazakhstan's independence says that Russia and Kazakhstan will fulfil their international commitments, above all those on the non-proliferation and limitation of nuclear weapons and on centralized control over them, all of which will lay a solid foundation for diplomatic relations" between the two states. [quotation marks as received]

Russia Recognizes Moldovan Independence

OW1812123291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1209 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday [18 December], Russia officially recognized Moldova's independence and expressed readiness to establish diplomatic relations with that republic. The RSFSR government's statement, signed by Boris Yeltsin, says Russia will seek to conclude a bilateral treaty on many-sided cooperation with Moldova, whose positive reaction to the formation of the Commonwealth was not left unnoticed.

Russia's leadership is confident that the two states "will find mutually acceptable ways of dealing with the existing problems, including the observance of human rights and respect for the rights of ethnic minorities."

Earlier Russia announced its recognition of the independence of Armenia and Kazakhstan.

International Affairs

Yeltsin Stages 'Show of Strength' for Baker

PM1712164391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report by diplomatic correspondent M. Yusin: "Russia Should Take the USSR's Place on the UN Security Council"]

[Text] The main event of the second and final day of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's visit to Moscow was his meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin. The talks lasted four hours—much longer than provided for in the protocol.

'Show of Strength' in the Kremlin's St. Catherine's Hall

In the opinion of foreign observers, after this meeting, by all appearances, Baker had lost his last remaining doubts as to who has real power in Moscow. Yeltsin staged a "show of strength" for the Americans. He received the secretary of state in the Kremlin's St. Catherine's Hall. Until yesterday only the top Union leaders had met foreign guests in that hall. The Russian leader was accompanied by the heads of two key Union ministries—Defense Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov and Internal Affairs Minister Viktor Barannikov.

Russia Asks United States for Diplomatic Recognition

Addressing journalists after the talks, Yeltsin stated that Russia has asked the United States for diplomatic recognition. He said that the biggest republic of the former Union expects to take the USSR's place among the permanent members of the UN Security Council. Apparently the other members of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] have no objection. Although there have not yet been any official statements in support of the Russian initiative.

The U.S. position on recognizing Russia and on its membership of the Security Council is not yet defined. Talking with journalists, Baker confined himself to an evasive answer, saying that these questions "require further study."

CIS Members Will Sign Treaty on Defense Union

Yeltsin was able, to all appearances, to dispel the Americans' fears about an uncontrolled breakup of the Soviet Army. The Russian president stated that within the CIS framework preparations are being made for the signing of a treaty on a defense union. It will provide for unified command of strategic armed forces, which will include the Navy, aviation, air defense, strategic and tactical nuclear weapons, and also intelligence.

The Commonwealth Armed Forces will be headed by a supreme commander in chief, who will be subordinate to the leaders of the CIS member states. The decision to use nuclear weapons could only be made with the consent of the leaders of the four "nuclear" republics.

The Russian president refuted press reports that the post of commander in chief will be offered to Mikhail Gorbachev, stating that his candidacy "has not been considered in this connection."

The Union Ministry of Internal Affairs [MVD], for which there is no provision at Commonwealth level, will be abolished. Its structures will merge with the Russian MVD. The same fate awaits Central Television.

Ten Republics Will Join Commonwealth by End of Year

Yeltsin is optimistic about the Commonwealth of Independent States. He promised that by 21 December, when the leaders of the three Slav and five Muslim republics of the former USSR are to meet in Alma-Ata, the number of CIS members will rise to nine, and by the end of the year to 10. Armenia and Moldova will join the eight republics.

Russia, the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus, on whose territory strategic missiles are sited, are prepared to sign the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Ukraine and Belarus have declared their desire to become nuclear-free states. Talks with Kazakhstan on its nuclear-free status lie ahead, the Russian president said.

Russia intends, furthermore, to sign the Soviet-U.S. Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms [START]. The RSFSR and the United States will establish joint monitoring [kontrol] of the safety of nuclear facilities and monitoring to prevent leaks of Soviet nuclear technology to other countries. The elimination of Soviet missiles envisaged under the START Treaty will take place with the Americans' help. In the opinion of the journalists accompanying Baker on his trip, the secretary of state obtained guarantees to this effect from the Soviet and Russian leaders in September, during his previous visit to Moscow.

Question of Gorbachev's Future Not Discussed

In the afternoon of 16 December, Baker had talks with Mikhail Gorbachev. According to the TASS report, "attention was focused on problems of control of the Soviet nuclear arsenal." According to Andrey Grachev, chief of the president's press service, the question of Gorbachev's political future was not discussed during the two-hour meeting.

On Monday [16 December] evening Baker had conversations with Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov and Union Minister of External Relations Eduard Shevardnadze. Baker and Shevardnadze then held a joint press conference.

In the morning of 17 December the secretary of state left for Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan. The next stops on his tour, which will last until Thursday, are Alma-Ata, Minsk, and Kiev.

U.S. Economist Comments on Russian Reform

OW1712135991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1203 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Wassily Leontief, a well-known U.S. economist of Russian stock and Nobel Prize winner, insisted that the concept of economic reforms that had been worked out by the Russian government should be speedily implemented. Speaking at the Monday inauguration of a St. Petersburg international center for socio-economic research named after Leontief himself, he said that nothing but a full- bloodied [word as received] price liberalization and large-scale privatization can overcome "the distortions in the country's economic life."

According to Mr. Leontief, today Russia is under the sway of "an extremely inferior market system and primitive economic relations that are not unlike those people had in primitive society." The U.S. economist also lashed out at the local governments that tend to crack down on black marketeering. In his opinion, black marketeers should be encouraged, and they may help get shop shelves filled with goods.

Touching on the prospects of a FEZ [free economic zone] in St. Petersburg, Mr. Leontief said that the prospects would be bright if the city can "tap its full potential and become an intellectual center for the whole of Russia."

Rutskoy To Visit Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan

Comments Before Departure

LD1712215791 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Russian Vice President Rutskoy left here today on a visit to Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. He, like Baker, will establish direct contacts, and will, of course, discuss the question of our prisoners-of-war in Afghanistan during the visit.

[Begin Rutskoy recording] The present aim of the visit is in the final count to solve the question of our prisoners of war. Much is being spoken about this subject, and has been spoken, but really specific actions—actions aimed at really getting our boys back—simply have not been undertaken. Suffice it to remember the agreement on the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan: For some reason this point was left out, although the problem could have been solved. Why? Because conditions could have been set at that time for the withdrawal to be implemented only after the prisoners of war had been handed over. This question could have been included in the agreement which was signed between the Soviet Union and the United States on stopping arms deliveries. This point on the release of our prisoners of war also could have been included. So, this visit to Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan has two tasks: The task of a peaceful settlement of

the question concerning Afghanistan, and the solution of the question of the prisoners of war.

Parallel to this is the examination of questions of economic cooperation with Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan alike. For instance, Iran is a Caspian neighbor, and to organize trade with Iran, it is sufficient to make a decision on the movement of ships to the Volga and the relevant transportation of goods. We have simply forgotten that we are a Eurasian country. I mean Russia is Eurasia, comparatively speaking. [end recording]

Aide Explains Objectives

OW1812035991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The working visits by the Russian vice-president Aleksandr Rutskoy to Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan (it will take place from December 17-22) pursue a three-fold objective, said Mr. Rutskoy's aide Andrey Fyodorov. Mr. Fyodorov clarified in an interview with IF [INTERFAX] that Mr. Rutskoy planned to help Russia conclude treaties with neighbour countries as soon as possible. According to Mr. Fyodorov, before 1992 is out, full-scale treaties beteen Russia and the countries of the Near East could be signed.

The other objective of the vice-president's visit is related to the first one, i.e., to stimulate trade and economic cooperation, said Mr. Fyodorov. Russia could offer Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan mutually beneficial terms to purchase from the Asian countries food it is so short of at present and other commodities.

And finally, Mr. Rutskoy is pursuing a third objective. An Afghan war veteran, he seeks to make a contribution to reaching a political settlement in Afghanistan. Mr. Rutskoy plans to meet in Pakistan with "all without exception" leaders of the Afghan mujahidin. According to Mr. Fyodorov, the Russian vice-president hopes to discuss the Soviet POW's issue and, as a minimum, to get reliable and first-hand information about their destiny. "It is necessary to have all Soviet POWs who wish to come back home to avail themselves of this right. It is no less important to receive reliable information about those who had died but are classified as MIA," said Mr. Fyodorov.

Leaves for Iran Visit

LD1712144191 Moscow TASS in English 1343 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 17 (TASS)—Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy left Moscow today for Iran on a working visit. A six-day visit will include talks in Pakistan and Afghanistan as well.

Agenda for Yeltsin Visit to Italy Outlined

PM1712141191 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report under general heading: "Diary"]

[Text] RSFSR President Boris Yeltsin will pay an official visit to Italy on 19-20 December at the invitation of Italian President Francesco Cossiga.

During the visit there are plans to sign an agreement on the general principles of relations between Russia and Italy, a document on trade cooperation, and a consular agreement. B. Yeltsin will have meetings with the president, the prime minister, and the head of the Italian foreign policy department. The RSFSR president will address the Senate.

There are plans for a visit to the Vatican and talk with John Paul II, head of the Roman Catholic Church.

Kuril Citizens Appeal to UN for Protection

OW1812094791 Moscow Central Television First Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1030 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Video report by A. Barkhatov; from "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] [Begin recording] [Barkhatov] We should go to places like Sakhalin to worship, just like Turks go to Mecca. One would think that after 100 years Chekhov's delight could be shared even by modern day politicians—peoples' deputies—after having visited the Southern Kurils, which are similar to Sakhalin in beauty. After a two-hour visit to Kunashir, even the president of Russia told the small group that met him—and which was later reported to the general public—that: I expected to see bare cliffs, but here is an abundant land. In Yeltsin's well publicized November letter, the Russian citizens heard: I can assure you that not one citizen of the Southern Kurils will have his future affected. Since the publication of the letter a month has passed without any kind of political news regarding the border argument with Japan.

Now local newspapers have disseminated the news. Hundreds of Kuril citizens are signing an appeal to the United Nations pleading that the islands of Kunashir, Iturup, Shikotan, and Habomai be included in the system of international trusteeship. Following are excerpts. We are subject to an information blockade regarding the intent of the Russian and Japanese Governments. The drawing up of the final resolution is being conducted without taking into consideration the opinions of the Southern Kuril citizens. [video shows Barkhatov interviewing an unidentified woman]

[Woman] Well, I have only a singular idea. The moment they announce that they are giving away the Kurils, I will take a placard, sit under the walls of the Kremlin, and say Yeltsin has given away my homeland.

[Barkhatov] Another clause from the Appeal: We reserve the right to defend our interests and human rights, in every possible way and employing any possible means. [video shows Barkhatov interviewing two unidentified fishermen aboard a trawler]

[First fisherman] It is unbelievable, unbelievable! Our leadership has told so many lies that we cannot believe anything or anyone.

[Second fisherman] We will defend the Kurils and our families from the hand over.

[Barkhatov] How?

[Second fisherman] If it comes down to it, with weapons. I do not want to call anyone to arms; I am opposed to that. However, if it does comes to that, then I suppose I will do it.

[Barkhatov] It is worth adding that according to the latest poll of Kuril citizens, a crushing majority still oppose the possible hand over of the islands to Japan. [end recording]

Swiss To Give Aid For Ecological Problems

OW1712234691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1500 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Swiss government is ready to give Russia 800 mln [million] francs in ecological aid, said Victor Danilov-Danilyan, Russia's ecology and environment minister, at a news conference in Moscow Tuesday [17 December]. According to him, other countries are also ready to help, "but they set one condition—they give money only for case-specific programs."

The minister described local governments' attitude toward their natural resources as an outrage. "Ignoring the president or other bodies and using rhetoric about sovereignty as a smoke shield, they are squandering their resources and don't allocate money for their reproduction," Mr Danilov-Danilyan said.

Finnish Red Cross To Supervise Aid Dispersal

LD1612235291 Moscow TASS in English 2252 GMT 16 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Voitto Leskinen]

[Text] Helsinki December 16 TASS—Finland's Foreign Affairs Ministry decided today to allocate 30 million Finnish marks for rendering humanitarian aid to the population of the Russia's regions near by Finland. 40 per cent of the total aid volume will be directed to St. Petersburg, 40 per cent—to Karelia and 20 per cent—to the Murmansk region, according to the Finnish telegraph bureau.

The humanitarian aid will consist of food-stuffs and medical preparations which will be delivered to the Russian population under the Finnish Red Cross control. The aid will be sent directly to the people needing it in hospitals and children's homes.

International Economists Support Reforms, Aid

OW1712234591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1500 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Although Russia's resolute action on the existing program of reforms is unlikely to send production rates up as early as next year, it will be sure to lay a sound foundation for a steady economic growth and a rise in living standards in the next few years. A statement to that effect was published by a group of international experts who have visited Moscow for consultations with the RSFSR leadership. The group included economists from Poland, the United States, Hungary and other countries. According to them, next year may see the removal of acute consumer shortages and inordinate inflation in Russia.

The experts believe that the RSFSR government should order comprehensive and simultaneous action in three directions: macroeconomic stabilization, the introduction of market mechanisms accompanied by the speedy privatization of state property, and the creation of a social security system. Significantly, the most unpopular measures in each of these areas should be taken at the very outset of the planned reforms.

The statement says that the international community ought to give the Russian government emergency assistance that should include food aid, financial support, a credit for the establishment of a ruble-stabilizing hard-currency fund, and a realistic approach to the debt obligations inherited by Russian from the Soviet Union. The Russian Federation's financial needs can be determined with sufficient accuracy through [as received] in the course of negotiations to be held between Russia's leadership and the International Monetary Fund.

For details about international experts' recommendations see IF's [INTERFAX] bulletin SOVIET BUSINESS REPORT.

Media

Republics Discuss Ties on Communications, TV

LD1612214291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent A. Lutskoy; from the "TV Inform" program]

[Text] [Lutskoy] Today, when ties between the former union's republics are falling apart, inter-republican television communications remain among the few connecting links. Until now, the lion's share of the budget of the State Radio and Television Company is being spent

on technical back-up for relaying Central Television program to all corners of the country. A meeting of heads and plenipotentiary representatives of the communication administrations of sovereign states was devoted to issues of how to carry on in conditions of the new political situation.

Are you satisfied with the results?

[V. Bulgak, Russian minister of communications] Yes, I am satisfied with the results. We have agreed upon and confirmed the expedience of and the need for setting up a community, a regional community [sodruzhestvo] in the field of communications. A Council of Ministers of Communications will be the supreme body there. We have agreed that the majority of republics will delegate Russia the right to represent their interests in the field of communications in the International Electro-Communication Union and in the Universal Postal Union.

[Lutskoy] Are there any differences between television and the Ministry of Communications?

[Ye. Yakovlev, chairman of State Radio and Television Company] Not differences but complexities, so to speak, regarding our future pay within the company's budget, pay for a large number of personnel, which will be represented by heads of comunications here. Herein lie difficulties. If there is a budget, there will be no differences, am I right?

[Bulgak] Yes, you are.

Belarus

Extraordinary Session of Supreme Soviet Opens

LD1712221091 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1700 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "New Wave" program]

[Text] A package of economic laws, the bulk of which is on various taxes and payments, has been submitted to an extraordinary session of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus, which opened today. Deputies plan to draw up the budget and the state plan for the republic for 1992, to adopt a decision on urgent measures for the pension provision of citizens, and to discuss issues of the social protection of the population in connection with the introduction of new prices.

Issues relating to USSR people's deputies from Belarus will also be examined to determine their future status and to find forms and methods to use the experience they have acquired in the country's parliament, Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the republic's Supreme Soviet, said.

About 20 items have been included in the agenda, among which is singled out setting up the institution of a control chamber of the Supreme Soviet as the main body for supervising the budget.

Further on Session

LD1812001491 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1906 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] At the decision of the Belarussian Supreme Soviet Presidium Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich the Republic's Supreme Soviet is moving into the building formerly occupied by the Communist Party Central Committee.

S. Shushkevich informed the deputies who attended the opening of the special 8th Supreme Soviet session on December 17, that the decision to move was based on the Supreme Soviet resolution on the property of the Communist Party of Belarus adopted on December 10. The opposition spoke out against the decision.

The agenda of the session includes such points as: the draft law of Belarus on the amnesty of certain categories of convicts the ratification of European human rights treaties legal and social guarantees of USSR peoples' deputies.

Excluded from the agenda was the question of a union of sovereign states and the discussion of Shushkevich's proposals concerning the reorganization of the Supreme Soviet, in line with which the Supreme Soviet is to be transformed into a congress of peoples deputies and a 90-member permanent body be elected. Since 90 deputies failed to attend the session, it continued its work in permanent commissions.

Poll Queries Support for Commonwealth

LD1812021791 Moscow TASS in English 1248 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By BELTA correspondent Vladimir Glod]

[Excerpt] Minsk December 17 TASS—Sixty-nine per cent of people in Belarus responded in the affirmative to a question as to whether they approved of the accords reached among the leaders of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus near Brest on December 8 on a Commonwealth of Independent States, according to an opinion poll taken by the Belarussian public opinion service among the republic's population.

Ten per cent of more than a thousand respondents answered the question in the negative, and every fifth had no definitive opinions. [passage omitted]

Moldova

President Notes Possible 'New Conflict'

OW1712163591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1500 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Speaking at a meeting of the Moldovan parliament Monday [16 December], Moldovan President Mircea Snegur warned that "confrontation has reached its culminating point and a new conflict may occur any moment." Snegur urged parliamentarians to give up personal and narrow group interests and to take urgent measures to settle the political situation in the Dnestr region and Gagauzia.

The president believes the two sides should begin, as a matter of priority, a constructive dialogue at the highest level possible. He called on parliamentarians to open the dialogue immediately ignoring demands by the Dnestr and Gagauz leaders for the creation of a Moldovan federation or confederation. Otherwise, Mr. Snegur argued, Moldova may lose all it has and face a civil war.

The Moldovan leader pointed out that a parliamentary refusal to take such measures without delay might cause him to try to carry them out using his presidential authorities, or tender his resignation.

New Internal Troop Force Established

PM1712154791 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Dec 91 Second Edition p 1

[From roundup of KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondents' and TASS reports under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Force of Carabineers Set Up"]

[Text] Kishinev—The Moldovan parliament has adopted a law setting up a republic Ministry of Internal Affairs Force of Carabineers (internal troops). Their maintenance, including the cost of light arms, will cost the treasury more than 350-400 million rubles per year at current prices.

Further on New Force

AU1812103091 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 0938 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Text] Chisinau [Kishinev] ROMPRES 18/12/1991—In the Republic of Moldova a law was published on the creation of gendarme troops, as part of the troops of the Ministry of the Interior, in charge of defending, alongside the police or independently, the public order, the citizens' basic rights and freedoms, the property, to prevent infringements of the law, said MOLDOVA PRES.

The Ministry of the Interior is only responsible for the organisation and training of the gendarme troops, for their observance of military discipline and order, for their subsidizing, technical endowment, and health care. The activity of the gendarme troops of the Republic of Moldova is non-political.

Republic Defense Issues Examined

LD1612154891 Kishinev Radio Kishinev Network in Russian 0700 GMT 16 Dec 91

[By Arshanu Dingo, official at the Republic of Moldova Department of Military Affairs, from Moscow]

[Text] In accordance with the statement adopted earlier by the conference of the committees of the chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the Union and representatives of sovereign and independent republics, on 9 December the first meeting was held of authorized representatives of sovereign states at the commission of the Chamber of the Union for questions of defense and security. It will function on a permanent basis with the aim of working out draft agreements and treaties to tackle the whole complex of military questions in light of the existing political realities.

At the first meeting the standpoints of each of the republics was straight away defined. The attempt of the organizers of the meeting to direct the work of the group to discussion of an already prepared draft treaty on collective defense and security was not crowned with success. First of all this way of presenting the question was unacceptable to Moldova, the Ukraine, and Georgia, because one must not move to discuss a treaty of collective security without having first decided the following questions. Whose are the Armed Forces of the former Union, and whom do they obey? In what direction should reform of the Armed Forces go? What portion of participation of each of the former republics should there be in this process? In what way should reciprocal guarantees be ensured for the transitional period, and so forth?

In order to avoid the Yugoslav scenario, it is essential first and foremost to adopt the appropriate political decisions in the military field. Further, it is essential to stipulate the specifics of the transitional stage, taking account of the interests of every independent state, and only then move to discussion of purely military questions.

After lengthy discussions, almost all the authorized representatives came to the conclusion that work must be started on an appropriate draft agreement at the level of heads of state. This document should define the beginning of the period of military reform and its time and framework. Apart from that the document should also contain a guarantee of the nonuse in the transitional period of armed forces for solving internal political tasks. In working out the draft, it will also be necessary to take account of the international agreements adopted in the area of armed forces reductions. The same document must also reflect questions connected with the ensuring of social guarantees for servicemen and members of their families.

Economic Cooperation Treaty Signed With Latvia

LD1512174991 Kishinev Radio Kishinev Network in Russian 0700 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Text] The most important among the numerous events which took place yesterday was the visit to our republic by Latvian Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis. The Latvian guest was received by President Mircea Snegur and Prime Minister Valeriu Muravski. Questions of interstate mutual relations between the sovereign powers of the Moldovan Republic and the Latvian Republic were discussed during the cordial and friendly conversation.

Ivars Godmanis spoke about the implementation of economic reforms. In particular, he shared his experience of the liberalization of agricultural produce prices.

The visit to Moldova by the Latvian prime minister ended with the signing of an intergovernmental treaty on economic cooperation in 1992 between Moldova and Latvia.

Border With Romania Opened to Travelers

OW1812035491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 17 Dec 91

["Diplomatic Panorama" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Beginning on December 25 Moldova's citizens will be able to cross into Romania at will, provided they have a Moldovan residence permit, said the republican Foreign Ministry to IF [INTERFAX].

Ukraine

Kravchuk on 'Liquidating' Nuclear Arms

LD1712223191 Kiev Radio Kiev Network in Ukrainian 0600 14 Dec 91

[Text] A conversation has taken place between Leonid Kravchuk and Kroner, leader of the EC delegation and Netherlands ambassador for special tasks. The EC representative showed interest in the position of the Ukraine and the Commonwealth of Independent States on issues of strategic nuclear weapons.

The president noted that the Ukraine is ready to join the nuclear nonproliferation treaty and is interested in liquidating them on its territory as soon as possible. Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk declared himself in favor of establishing broad cooperation between the Ukraine and the EC countries in the economic sphere. He also asked the guest to pass on the message that the Ukraine desires to be accepted to European structures as soon as possible.

Official on Armed Forces' Subordination

PM1712210391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 18 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Interview with Ukrainian Defense Minister Colonel General K. Morozov by correspondent A. Polyakov; place and date not given: "Colonel General K. Morozov: Troops in Ukraine Are Subordinate to USSR Defense Minister"]

[Text] After the signing by Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk of two decrees regulating the creation of the Ukraine's own armed forces, many readers have been wondering what is happening in the Ukraine at the moment and how the formation of the republic army is proceeding. Our permanent correspondent Colonel A. Polyakov talked to the Ukrainian Defense Minister Colonel General K. Morozov about this.

[Polyakov] Konstantin Petrovich, in a conversation with journalists Friday, 13 December, Marshal of Aviation Ye. Shaposhnikov said the Armed Forces are subordinate to the USSR defense minister. But Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk has assumed the duties of commander in chief of the Ukrainian armed forces, which are to include troops from the military districts and the Black Sea Fleet. To whom are the troops in the Ukraine now subordinate? Whose orders do they carry out?

[Morozov] Marshal Yevgeniy Ivanovich Shaposhnikov is absolutely right. The troops stationed in the Ukraine remain in the former structures and are subordinate to the USSR defense minister. The Ukrainian president's decrees marked the conclusion of the preparatory phase in creating a legal basis for the organization of the Ukraine's own armed forces. As defense minister, I am now obliged to elaborate the practical aspects involved in the implementation of the decrees and prepare the necessary documents. This work will be done in collaboration with a group headed by Colonel General V. Pyankov, USSR deputy defense minister.

[Polyakov] Incidentally, some officers and generals are assessing the arrival of this group from Moscow as the appearance of a kind of "fire brigade" come to extinguish possible contradictions between the Ukrainian Defense Ministry and the district troops following the surprise presidential decrees.

[Morozov] There is no question of any "fire-fighting functions" because there is no confrontation. We ourselves have repeatedly asked for such a group to be sent. Following its arrival, a working meeting was held during which I gave an address on the concept of creating the Ukrainian Defense Ministry and Ukrainian armed forces and on the intended transitional period needed to create the right conditions for the reassigning of the troops.

[Polyakov] Is there not a danger of the existence of two armies in the Ukraine: one subordinate to Marshal Ye. Shaposhnikov, and the other to Colonel General K. Morozov?

[Morozov] No, it is planned that all the troops in the Ukraine will be reassigned simultaneously rather than reassigning individual divisions and armies. For the transitional period, district structures downwards are being preserved. Later they will be reformed, and the number of personnel will be kept to the bounds of reasonable sufficiency. I would like to stress that we will be working with the USSR Ministry of Defense and the General Staff all the time. We will prepare joint documents on the organization of the administrative leadership of the troops and on the collection of data on their state and logistical support, and we will determine the troops that will be part of the strategic deterrence forces and the units that will serve them, which will be subordinate to the single command.

[Polyakov] Many people assessed the appearance of the decrees as a signal for the immediate reassigning of troops in the Ukraine and their withdrawal from the USSR Defense Ministry's control.

[Morozov] We do not intend to take any hasty steps. The presidential decree clearly speaks of the step-by-step building of the Ukrainian armed forces. Our actions will take into account the interests of the existing groupings of troops, the USSR Defense Ministry, and the General Staff and will be constructed on a mutual treaty basis.

[Polyakov] Isn't a situation now arising whereby conflicting directives are being issued to the district troops from the two defense ministries?

[Morozov] That is out of the question. I do not know of any cases where we would put a commander of any rank in a double position whereby he would not know to whom he is subordinate and whose orders he should

carry out. We are creating a legal basis for the transitional period, and we are operating in a considered and thoughtful way. I would like to warn all Ukrainian officers who are performing their service outside the district's territory that they must not take any rash steps. Everything must be within the framework of the law.

[Polyakov] Konstantin Petrovich, in the future will officers in the Ukrainian army be able to be promoted on the basis of their service in the Russian army, for example? After all, there will be fewer generals and colonels in the Ukraine and obtaining the next rank is always a question of prestige for a military man.

[Morozov] It is hard to see the future. Some kind of transfers will probably be possible, but this will scarcely be the rule or the norm. The Ukrainian army of the future is the army of an autonomous state.

[Polyakov] Thank you for the interview.

[Morozov] I would like to express my thanks to KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, which I have been reading since I was nine, for its attention to our common problems.

National Guard's Status Assessed

PM1812102791 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 10 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Interview with S.V. Kolesnik, member of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Permanent Commission for Questions of Defense and State Security, by Major A. Petrov; place and date not given: "Sergey Kolesnik: ...Russia Can, But We Cannot?"—first two paragraphs are introduction]

[Text] **From KRASNAYA ZVEZDA's File**

S.V. Kolesnik is a deputy of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet and a member of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Permanent Commission for Questions of Defense and State Security. He took an active part in drawing up the package of laws on questions of military building, including "On the Ukrainian National Guard."

During 1983-1985 he performed compulsory service in the ranks of the Soviet Army. He spent eight months fighting in Afghanistan as deputy commander of a motorized rifle platoon. He is a senior sergeant in the reserve.

[Petrov] Sergey Vitalyevich, why is the Ukrainian National Guard being created actually on the base of the USSR MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] Internal Troops?

[Kolesnik] First, the internal troops can be decentralized far more easily than the Armed Forces. They exist in all regions—in the Ukraine and Moldova, in Central Asia and Kazakhstan, in Belarus and Russia, and so on. The clear-cut regional division of Union troops makes it possible to painlessly excise the units stationed on Ukrainian territory from their overall system. The interests of other republics will not suffer in any way here. Second, the operational units and special motorized militia units of the internal troops—and precisely these will be the first to form the guard—are renowned for their good training, firm discipline, and high combat readiness. The majority of them have undergone baptism of fire in Karabakh and other "hot spots."

Third and last, creating a national guard from scratch means engaging in the country's additional militarization. Why do we need this when there are the million-strong Union Armed Forces and thousands-strong Border Guard and internal troops on our territory and, on top of everything else, units are being withdrawn to here from West Europe? Why, one wonders, do we need still more caterpillar tracks, submachine guns, and cartridges?

[Petrov] At a briefing for Soviet and foreign journalists, Colonel General V. Barannikov, USSR minister of internal affairs, shared with everyone the idea of creating interrepublic internal troops out of the existing operational units and units for guarding particularly important state installations....

[Kolesnik] This is impossible. They will have over them a chief from a central organ, and there will be nothing interrepublican left in them. In addition, there is a Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Presidium decree on the subordination to the republic's government of all—I emphasize, all—the USSR MVD Internal Troops stationed on its territory.

[Petrov] But the general maintained that he had brought the republics' internal affairs ministers together and that an accord was reached on this....

[Kolesnik] The internal affairs ministers are concerned not so much with the fate of the internal troops in general as with having the escort units under their control. The "zone" means fantastic profits! It is possible to make big money when you become its sole master.

[Petrov] But who, then, will "settle" armed interethnic conflicts and eliminate mass disturbances?

[Kolesnik] Each sovereign state must settle its internal affairs without outside assistance. The presence of any other state's police organ will only produce a negative result.

Of course, we can reach agreement with Russia on mutual assistance in the event of interethnic conflicts arising—although I personally am opposed to such agreements.

[Petrov] What do you think about the presence of Union internal troops in NKAO [Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast]?

[Kolesnik] It is senseless. The sooner they get out of there, the better. There are no longer any of our Ukrainian units there. We have no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of sovereign Armenia and Azerbaijan in the future.

[Petrov] But what if an order still comes from the center to send the Kiev operational regiment and commanding officers to the NKAO to replace others?

[Kolesnik] I think we will be able to persuade the center not to do that. If they do not heed us, well, we will take other measures. But we will no longer put our citizens into the Karabakh meat grinder!

And, in general, why should we go to Karabakh? Let us send troops to Lebanon with equal success. Let us introduce them into Yugoslavia—people are fighting and dying there too. We will not go—we must not. But we can go to Azerbaijan?

[Petrov] Sergey Vitalyevich, let us return to the national guard. Let us assume that the structures have been created, the functional duties have been worked out, and the time has come for specific work in internal troop units, but the center is opposed....

[Kolesnik] Such a development of events is simply impossible. The USSR MVD Internal Troops have, at most, one month left to live. Russia has appropriated the internal troops stationed on its territory, and we would simply be ashamed not to follow its example. It turns out that Russia can, but we cannot?

[Petrov] What will happen to the hardware, the military camps, and the weapons of the Union internal troops?

[Kolesnik] Our position is in favor of the zero option. We have no claims on you, nor you on us. Everything we had remains with us. The only thing to which we can lay claim is part of the USSR MVD's property.

[Petrov] Will the USSR MVD Internal Troops Administration for the Ukraine and Moldova be disbanded?

[Kolesnik] It is being reorganized as the administration of the national guard commander. The officers serving there today will not be left without a job.

[Petrov] The tasks to be shouldered by the national guard do not include guarding corrective labor establishments. Who will do this?

[Kolesnik] We advocate that this should be done not by 18-year-old youths—nowhere else can a young person's psyche be traumatized as badly as in the escort troops—but by volunteers, for good money. The Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers has been entrusted with drawing up a draft Ukrainian law on internal and escort guard duty before 15 December—this is prescribed in the resolution on bringing the law on the national guard into force.

Donetsk Miners Strike, Present Demands

LD1812105591 Kiev Radio Kiev in English 0100 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Text] Six thousand miners from the Komsomolets Donbassa mine in Donetsk region have been on strike for two days now. Among their demands is granting full economic independence to the mine, the setting up of a commission with the participation of the government of Ukraine, national security services and independent trade unions for studying the financial transactions of the mine. All the demands of the miners must be fulfilled in a week's time.

Political Parties Cautious About Commonwealth

OW1712213591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Many of the Ukraine's political parties and organizations which have been campaigning for the independence of their republic have shown a great deal of caution about the possibility of the Ukraine joining the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The Democratic Party of the Ukraine has circulated a statement expressing fears lest the Commonwealth treaty might cost the Ukraine the loss of independence. "The new community should be viewed exclusively as a transitional form of dismantling the Soviet empire," it said.

Earlier, the Ukrainian National Assembly and the all-Ukrainian Association of Working People's Solidarity had expressed fears lest the Commonwealth might replace the old Union.

Communique on UK Consular Agreement Issued

LD1812044491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1529 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By TASS-UKRINFORM correspondents Sergey Bibik and Aleksey Petrunya]

[Text] Kiev, 14 Dec (TASS)—Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk today received Leonard Vincent Appleyard, deputy secretary of state of the Ministry of Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The guest passed on to L. Kravchuk congratulations from the prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs of his country on his election as president of the Ukraine and on the sucessful results of the all-Ukrainian referendum. During the conversation, L.V. Appleyard was briefed on the political and economic situation in Ukraine. Questions of mutual interest were also discussed.

A joint communique on the establishment of consular relations between the Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was signed the same day.

IMF Ready To Consider Republic's Membership

LD1712222391 Moscow TASS in English 1934 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Alexey Petrunya]

[[Text] Kiev December 17 TASS—International Monetary Fund (IMF) Deputy Executive Manager Richard D. Erb told Ukrainian Prime Minister Vitold Fokin today that IMF was ready to consider Ukraine's application for membership.

The decision, though, will depend on diplomatic recognition of sovereign Ukraine by the world community, Erb said. For the time being, IMF will conduct talks on all aspects of the problem with Ukraine and help the Republic to stabilize Ukraine's economy and finances.

Erb also said that Ukraine's membership in the International Monetary Fund would no be hampered by the absence of free currency.

Fokin informed Erb about the economic and financial situation in Ukraine and noted that the Republic's government now has a comprehensive programme of economic stabilization.

Fokin said the government's main concern at present was to restore equilibrium in the social sphere and satiate the market.

"The adoption of Ukraine as a member of the International Monetary Fund and the International Development Bank will be an act of extreme importance as it will testify to the desire to help Ukraine on the part of developed countries," Fokin said.

He pointed out that Ukraine would like to get help in solving the problem of the former Soviet Union's foreign debt. "We are ready to pay our portion. But we have the right to claim our part in what is owed to the USSR by other countries," Fokin said.

"We also need assistance to reconstruct industries, carry through conversion and privatisation. We have enterprises which we could sell to foreign companies."

Richard Erb assured Fokin that the International Monetary Fund would help Ukraine solve its problems.

Validity of International Treaties Confirmed

LD1512072791 Kiev Radio Kiev in English 0100 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Text] Today the [Ukrainian Supreme Soviet] deputies adopted the bill on the validity of international treaties on the territory of Ukraine. According to the law, all the international treaties ratified by Ukraine become an inalienable part of the national legislation of Ukraine and must be valid like national laws of the republic. The most important of these are: the UN Charter—an international pact on economic, social, and cultural rights; an international pact on civil and political rights; a whole number of conventions of the International Labor Organization.

Also adopted by the MP's [members of parliament] was the law on foreign investments. This law protects foreign investments and the interests of foreign investors in case of any changes in the republic's legislation. Foreign investments are protected against nationalization and expropriation.

Besides the above documents the deputies to the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine adopted the law on stock exchange; ratified an agreement on interstate relations between Ukraine and Republic of Uzbekistan; introduced changes to the criminal code of Ukraine—the plenary powers of the USSR procurator general were thus transferred upon the procurator general of Ukraine.

Foreign Minister Returns From Bulgaria

LD1512021391 Kiev Radio Kiev in English 2200 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] Anatoliy Zlenko, Ukraine's foreign minister, has returned to Kiev after a one-day visit to Sofia. In the Bulgarian capital he signed a protocol on the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two states. Also signed were documents on consular relations. The foreign minister of Bulgaria, Stoyan Ganev, expressed the view that in several weeks time an ambassador of Bulgaria will arrive in Kiev. A Ukrainian diplomat of the same rank will represent our country in Sofia.

Anatoliy Zlenko was received by the president of Bulgaria, Zhelyu Zhelev. It was pointed out during the talks that the two countries will sign an agreement on friendship and cooperation in January.

The Ukrainian foreign minister passed on to Zhelyu Zhelev an invitation from Ukraine's President Leonid Kravchuk to visit Ukraine.

Coupons Introduced as 'Secondary Money'

PM1712153791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Sergey Tsikora report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Coupons Have Arrived by Military Aircraft"]

[Text] Kiev—An Antonov heavy military transport aircraft has delivered to Kiev a consignment of reusable coupons printed in France.

The reusable coupons will become a secondary form of money for the Ukraine. In accordance with a parliamentary decision, they will be introduced at the latest next January, the same time as prices are liberalized in Russia. The Ukraine is afraid that the new millions of rubles of "monopoly" money being printed around the clock in the factories of the Russian Main Administration for Production of State Bank Notes, Coins, and Medals will pour out into the republic market and sweep away the miserable remains of the goods that are still there. So, not having its own money yet, the Ukraine has decided to protect its market with coupons.

As V. Matviyenko, chairman of the Ukrainian National Bank board, stated wages in the republic will be issued

partly in coupons and partly in rubles. It is proposed that at first only food goods will be acquirable on the new coupons.

All the finer points of the introduction of the "secondary money" and its functioning on the financial market will become known by 16 December, the date when the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers commission specially formed for this purpose concludes its work.

Economic Ties to World Community Analyzed

AU1712132691 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian No. 232, 30 Nov 91 p 11

[Article by Anton Filipenko, doctor of economic sciences, professor, head of chair of international economic relations at the Ukrainian International Relations Institute: "'In Isolation'? We Will Survive...."; the first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] **Among the questions that are of concern to public opinion on the eve of the 1 December referendum there increasingly emerge those that are associated with the economic interaction between the independent Ukraine and states of the world community. These are, first and foremost, whether the Ukraine will manage to independently pursue an effective foreign economic policy—that is to say, safeguard its geopolitical economic interests as an independent sovereign state; what the objective material preconditions for this are; and, the main thing, what specific steps must be made for implementing the sovereign choice.**

Human experience shows that a country's competitiveness in world economic ties and its priorities in the international division of labor may be guaranteed if several main conditions are fulfilled. First, the country must have a sufficiently developed economic, scientific-technological, and intellectual potential. Second, an organic contact with the world market economy may only be ensured by an internal infrastructure based upon modern market relations. Third, the implementation of a foreign economic model must be based upon a strong state strategy and policy.

Both our and foreign assessments and estimates indicate that the Ukraine has the main precondition for implementing a foreign economic strategy that will be independent and will be aimed at satisfying the interests of the people. It is its resources potential, an extremely advantageous geographical situation, a favorable climate, and so on.

Even the fact that the level of the Ukraine's economic, scientific, technological development does not, unfortunately, correspond to similar indexes in well-developed states cannot become an obstacle (as some of our opponents are trying to scare us with) to the development of a mutually advantageous division of labor with other countries. It has been incontestably proven, since the times of A. Smith and D. Ricardo, that international economic cooperation is based upon so-called "comparative advantages," the essence of which, in a somewhat simplified form, lies in the fact that a country exports those products that are for it the cheapest to manufacture and imports those products that would be more expensive to manufacture at home. The structure of foreign trade is still based on this theoretical concept, and the end goal of such trade is to maintain balanced and mutually advantageous exchange.

Thus, the world economic "philosophy" is not oriented toward any specific states but rather toward corresponding goods and services that are in circulation on the world market. For example, a "traditional" model of economic management is oriented toward the utilization in the Ukraine of mainly Siberian oil. The new model, which is largely meant for guaranteeing national economic security, rejects such a "single-source" concept, because it may become (and is already becoming) a method for political and economic pressure. This follows from the experience of other countries.

The state must also accomplish substantial structural changes in the economy in order to secure for the Ukraine certain niches in the world market. Even now, our machine-tool and aircraft-building industries, superhard materials, powder metallurgy, instrument-making industry, certain types of domestic equipment, and so on are highly competitive. In a further expansion of the list of the Ukraine's export products, the export of science-intensive and high technologies must become priority ones: the know-how, the licenses for computer programs, and so on. The most important task is to overcome the archaic raw-materials orientation of our export. It is precisely here that reserves of its economic efficiency are hidden.

National currency is the key link in the foreign economic infrastructure, because it is not only a national symbol but also a guarantee of its unity, integrity of its economic space, and national economic identity.

The introduction of our own freely convertible national currency must be based upon three main principles. First, its economic power, stability, and real value must be guaranteed by goods and services that are competitive on world markets and that are in demand and involve corresponding demand for the national currency. Second, any convertible currency is also based upon the insurance funds of so-called hard commodities, first and foremost, gold, platinum, diamonds, and freely convertible currencies. Third, we need, at the first stage, to obtain foreign credits in order to provide support for our own monetary unit and its elastic involvement in the world monetary circulation.

As we can see, the fulfillment of the first condition is entirely in the hands of the state, its manufacturers, and entrepreneurs who are capable of creating a modern powerful export potential within a short period of time, provided that it gets some assistance.

The second condition is connected with the division of the former USSR's gold and currency reserves, with the determination of the share of the Ukraine's foreign economic debt and assets, and with the further independent resolution of all world economic problems.

The fulfillment of the third condition must proceed to the best advantage through the establishment of direct interactions with international currency and financial organizations: with the World Bank, with the International Monetary Fund, and with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The world experience incontestably indicates that it is necessary to create a proper market infrastructure for a harmonious interaction of the Ukraine with the contemporary international market economy. The commodity and financial markets, the markets of services, technologies, housing, and manpower must closely interact with similar sectors of the world market by way of developing in the Ukraine of a ramified network of commercial and financial institutions, commodity-fund exchanges, intermediate and consulting firms and services, the system of information, communications, and advertising—in short, of the entire production and social infrastructure.

The adoption by the Supreme Council of the Law on Foreign Economic Activity creates preconditions for concentrating efforts and resources in this direction.

At the same time, it would have been a great mistake and a great deception of the people if we paint the road toward independence, including in the foreign economic sphere, in rosy colors alone.

First, the integration of the economy of independent Ukraine into the system of world economic ties, apart from the fact that it offers indubitable advantages, at the same time demands that its structure and the entire economic mechanism undergo a serious adaptation to the extremely high requirements dictated by the world market economy. As indicated by estimates, these requirements are higher than the present "domestic" ones by at least one order of magnitude. At the same time, the world economy is characterized by a cyclic character of development that has a contrary influence upon the national economy of individual countries. Therefore, as we become integrated into world economic processes, we must take into account their "whims" and create reliable "shock-absorbers" for possible unfavorable turns.

Second, the economic relations between the Ukraine and the republics of the former USSR are becoming too uncertain and unpredictable. They are gradually but steadily acquiring the character of foreign economic ties, and this places the Ukraine in the same category as those European states that have a well-developed modern economy that is open to the world. The economic Union, which the Ukraine nearly joined, fixes the present status quo and will not, at least not so soon, trigger additional economic activity on the part of our enterprises. Here, the increasing economic chaos, instability, a further aggravation of the crisis, the disruption of the monetary and finance and credit systems, and so on are making themselves felt. For that reason, the so-called "ruble zone," whose currency is catastrophically falling and has no real chances of becoming freely convertible, must be looked upon as a temporary phenomenon. Economic ties with the republics of the former Union, especially with Russia, will undoubtedly develop and intensify, but this will proceed within a different configuration and upon fundamentally new principles.

Armenia

President's Move Prompts Hostage Release

LD1712234791 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] A total of 95 of the 105 Azerbaijani hostages captured during the seizure of the Baku-Nakhichevan train were released today after Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan introduced the Megri Rayon emergency. Talks on the release of all the hostages continue.

Leader Meets IMF Delegation, Seeks Membership

NC1512190391 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1600 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] Armenian President Ter-Petrosyan received an IMF delegation on 13 December [words indistinct]. The delegation has visited a number of republics within the framework of the agreement it signed with G-7 countries and had (?contacts) with Deputy Prime Minister Bagratyan and Finance Minister Dzhanoyan in Armenia. The delegation members are interested in learning about the possible course of development of the political process unfolding in the former Soviet Union, the stance of republican officials, the domestic situation in Armenia, and measures taken for economic reforms.

After providing a detailed [words indistinct] on points raised and pointing out that the economic situation is grave because of ongoing blockades and that radical measures must be taken, Ter-Petrosyan mentioned Armenia's wish to become a member of the IMF. He stressed that IMF retraining of Armenian specialists and the general expertise the IMF can provide for legislative, economic, and structural reforms in the republic and would be of great assistance.

In response, [name indistinct] noted that official recognition of the Armenian Republic by a few [word indistinct] countries would greatly help Armenia's bid for IMF membership. The delegation members expressed readiness to consider the president's requests and said that the delegation would visit Armenia in January to become more familiar with the situation and to formulate a practical program.

Other issues of mutual interest were also discussed at the meeting.

Deputy Prime Minister Bagratyan and other officials were present during the meeting.

Romania Establishes Diplomatic Relations

OW1812135891 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1209 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] As the Armenian TV news program "Vestnik" reported Tuesday [17 December], Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Hovhannesyan and his Romanian counterpart Adrian Nastase signed an agreement establishing diplomatic relations between Armenia and Romania in Bucharest December 17th.

Romania is the third country after Russia and Lithuania to recognize Armenia's independence.

The Armenian foreign minister has left Bucharest for Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil.

New Council To Supervise Economic Transition

NC1312090691 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1950 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] The Armenian Government has decided to establish a Social-Economic Council attached to the Presidium of the Council of Ministers to spur and organize the transition to a market economy and to ensure that economic reforms are being conducted systematically.

The Council is composed of state ministers, the heads of the Armenian Supreme Soviet standing commissions, ministers, specialists from the Ministry of Economy, scholars, directors of enterprises and production associations, heads of various associations, and businessmen.

The decision also envisaged a role for the council of experts proposed by foreign countries and various political parties.

The Council held its first meeting on 12 December under Chairman Gagik Arutyunyan, vice president and prime minister of the republic.

The Council examined a package of decisions and decrees under formulation which envisages the transition to free prices and the broadening of market relations. This package includes the following issues: a transition to free prices and price setting system, a minimum wage, the creation of independent customs administration, the indexation of the people's incomes, the regulation of foreign currency operations in Armenia, the infusion of science and technology into the national economy, etc.

It also examined the possibilities of providing broad opportunities to the credit system, foreign economic relations, enterprises and organizations; the regulation of relations between the primary production loops and the state and of interstate economic relations; the clarification of relations between banks and financial institutions on one hand and enterprise on the other; and a number of other issues.

Special attention was given to the newly functioning economic system and the formation of special mechanisms for social protection.

Foreign Minister on European Recognition

PM1612105791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Sergey Bablumyan report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Window on Europe Opens for Armenia"]

[Text] Yerevan—Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Hovhannesyan has completed his tour of seven European countries.

The chief of the republic foreign policy department met with Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti; Hans van den Broek, Netherlands foreign minister and chairman of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers; other statesmen and politicians from European countries; and representatives of the Armenian diaspora.

Hovhannesyan reported that, among a number of other questions, the question of recognizing Armenia's independence was discussed during the conversations that took place. Some countries, specifically Britain, Germany, France, and Italy, reacted with approval to the idea of permanent Armenian missions opening in their countries.

Azerbaijan

President Meets With Military Commanders

NC1812113391 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1800 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] President Ayaz Mutalibov, commander in chief of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces, met today with Army General Nikolay Popov, commander of the military forces in the southern sector, his deputies and force commanders, and the commanders of the military forces based in Azerbaijan. Several important matters were discussed, including the rights and social security of military personnel in Azerbaijan.

State Secretary Mitat Abasov, State Adviser Sabir Gadzhiyev, Defense Minister Tadzhettin Mekhtiyev, Foreign Minister Tofik Kerimov, and National Security Minister I. Guseynov attended the meeting.

State Council, Deputy View 'Slavic Union'

NC1812072491 Istanbul HURRIYET in Turkish 12 Dec 91 p 11

[Ramiz Asker report: "Azerbaijan Is Careful"]

[Text] Baku (HURRIYET)—President Ayaz Mutalibov, who flew to Moscow after the decision was adopted establishing a Slavic union, returned to Azerbaijan two days ago and convened the Azerbaijan State Council. A statement released after this meeting said: "The Slavic union will be well received if it respects the other republics' independence and rights to sovereignty."

It has been disclosed that the Azerbaijan legislature will make the final decision on the matter.

But Deputy Tofik Kasumov, in a statement to HURRIYET, has claimed that the Slavic union will try to place the other republics under its control. He asserted: "What does the union of Slavic republics mean? They want the non-Slavic republics to join them. This is a trick. The Kremlin has lost its strength and no longer is the central authority. It is unable to make the former Soviet republics comply with its decisions. The three Slavic republics now wish to take over Kremlin's role by establishing a union. Their objective is to resurrect the former empire under the Slavic fur hat."

Prime Minister Discusses Economy

LD1712224591 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1906 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Domestic Market" section]

[Text]—Azerbaijan prime minister: Azerbaijan has passed the exam of the economic survival under conditions of the USSR conditions of the USSR break-up and destruction of economic ties. [sentence as received]

On December 16, Gasan Gasanov, Azerbaijan's prime minister, told PF [POSTFACTUM] that this year a certain raise in the returns from investments and industrial production volume, including consumer goods. [sentence as received] The Western experts affirm that Azerbaijan will be able to feed itself and that in 1992 the Republic is not threatened with a fall in the production rates, Gasanov stressed.

The prime minister announced the main directions of the social and economic conception approved by the government: Deepening and widening of economic ties with the former republics of the USSR, integration with the economic potential of Turkey, Iran and other countries with the aim of a quick exit to the world market, development of joint ventures for production of competitive goods raising of the oil and gas production, arranging of exports of oil and oil-processing products and surplus electrical energy to other countries. The conception also provides for transformation of chemical and petrochemical industry for production of the ready goods. Besides, the conception includes raising of the aluminum production thanks to joint venture arrangements and sales of products abroad for the hard currency, setting up of the national machine-building industry, changes in the structure of the agro-industrial complex and solution of the foodstuffs problem by way of the use of the modern technology, barter trade and purchases, as well as development of private farming in the agriculture.

Gasanov underlined that it will take more than one year and a lot of hard currency for the Republic to pass the difficult way of the sovereignty at present. Azerbaijan is not really a free state, as it is in the state of the war with

Armenia, does not an Army and a currency of its own or the guarded borders, Gasanov said. [sentence as received]

Nagorno-Karabakh Appeals For Recognition

LD1712193191 Moscow TASS in English 1808 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Moscow December 17 TASS—The Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region on Tuesday [17 December] urged the Commonwealth of Independent States, the U.N. General Assembly, the heads of state, and parliamentarians to recognise the region as an independent state.

The appeal was issued by the regional executive committee at the request of the Nagorno-Karabakh governing council, Leonard Petrosyan, leader of the executive committee, told TASS.

The leaders of Nagorno-Karabakh have pledged to observe all international laws, and respect people's rights and freedoms regardless of their nationality or belief, the appeal said.

15 Killed in 17 Dec Clashes

LD1712175491 Moscow TASS in English 1512 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Moscow December 17 TASS—A total of 15 people were killed and over 20 wounded in clashes between the Soviet Interior Ministry troops and armed guerrillas in the Nagorno-Karabakh disputed enclave on Tuesday [17 December].

Five Armenians were killed after a group of armed Azeris attacked the village of Gasanabad on Monday [16 December].

One soldier was killed and four heavily wounded as a result of a shoot-out between guerrilla forces and an Interior Ministry unit in the village of Agdam.

Yuri Balakhonov, representative of the Soviet Interior Ministry troops in the region, said Azerbaijani guerrillas' attacks against military units are becoming increasingly aggressive.

He also stressed the troops are facing a severe economic and transport blockade organised by the Azerbaijani side.

Concern Over Troop Withdrawal

NC1712175091 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1600 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] ARMENPRES and [word indistinct] report that nine people died and 16 were injured during armed clashes yesterday in Nagorno-Karabakh.

According to information released by the military commandant of the state of emergency region and KARABAKH NEWS AGENCY, the internal troops have (?effectively silenced) areas from where settlements and military subunits were fired upon with artillery, missiles, and rifles.

The administration and the population of Nagorno-Karabakh are worried about reports that the internal troops may leave the region. Leonard Petrosyan, chairman of the executive committee, has sent cables to Vadim Bakatin, Viktor Barannikov, and Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov in which he expressed anxiety over the possible consequences of such a move.

Committee Views Military Training of Youths

NC1812120491 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1800 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] A meeting at the Azerbaijan Youth League Central Committee examined problems related to training youths for military service. Representatives of the Education Ministry, the voluntary sports association for military service, and mass media organs participated in the convocation.

People's Deputy Sahip Alekperov, first secretary of the Azerbaijan Youth League Central Committee, and other participants addressed the meeting on the importance of further strengthening coordination of the work of the organizations responsible for training youths for military service and the work to be carried out to train personnel and prepare military cadres to defend the republic.

In view of Armenia's attacks on Azerbaijan, this task has become particularly important.

A decision was adopted to establish a special coordination council affiliated with the Azerbaijan Youth League Central Committee to resolve practical problems related to youth training quickly.

Georgia

Armed Units 'Prepared' To Attack S. Ossetia

OW1712211791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2000 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The commander of the unit located in the suburbs of Tskhinvali, the administrative centre of South Ossetia, confirmed on Tuesday [17 December] the South and North Ossetian interior bodies' intelligence about an attack on Tskhinvali prepared by the Georgian armed formations. He said that Grad rocket launchers had been concentrated near Tskhinvali. One hit may cover an area of 12 hectares.

Gamsakhurdia Interviewed on State Affairs

LD1812102491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1942 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Interview with Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia by correspondent Urmas Ott in Tbilisi on 10 December—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Ott] Mr. President, I am very glad to welcome you to our "TV Acquaintance" program. Like us, you have had a very hard day. We were waiting for this interview, but you have indeed had a very full day. A big rally was held at the government building in Tbilisi today. Rumors have reached us that the rally was also attended by the Georgian opposition. Mr. President, how do you, generally, do battle with the opposition and their program?

[Gamsakhurdia] We only deal with the opposition by using words and ideas. We have recourse to methods of persuasion, we polemicize and discuss, but we do not shoot, even though we are accused of this particular sin and even though there is slander alleging that we do shoot. In actual fact, it is the opposition itself that has resorted to using arms. It attacked our government building and here, incidentally, shots were met by us with shots in the air.

[Ott] So, any statements by you to the effect that the opposition must be physically wiped out are garbage?

[Gamsakhurdia] Absolute garbage. Not a single document exists to confirm this. What the opposition is saying—that it has no arms, that it is unarmed—this, too, is garbage.

Incidentally, one of its representatives stated on Central Television recently that the opposition is absolutely unarmed. Well, you can say he has managed to amuse everyone.

[Ott] Well, during today's rally you made rather short work of the opposition arguments.

[Gamsakhurdia] Yes, of course. I, simply ... because it is very easy to deal with their arguments, because these are childish arguments, ignorant arguments, ignorant arguments. Well, let me immediately give you an example. The opposition says that human rights are being violated here in Georgia, that we, the government, violate human rights. Here is what they offer as an example: a man stops the traffic, erects barricades in a central avenue and places his own armed people there—that is to say, he has declared war on the state and the government. We arrest him—this means we violate his rights, we violate human rights. Consequently, we are dictators, Georgia is a fascist country, there is totalitarianism here, and there are no human rights here. All in all, this fact is offered as an argument—namely, that a person who erected huge barricades and generally prevented pedestrians from walking along the street has been arrested. So, such arguments are given.

Or, for instance, the fact that we do not, for example, allow armed formations to deploy themselves somewhere in the city and to do what they want, to shoot and blow everything up, or, for instance, to loot the television center and to organize some sort of actions there. This is tantamount to plundering government buildings, and this is what we ban. It is this ban that they call suppression of freedom, dictatorship, and so on. Well, it is very easy to cope with arguments such as these, very easy.

[Ott] What do you think, Mr. Gamsakhurdia: Is there a serious opposition in Georgia at present, or is it not all that serious?

[Gamsakhurdia] It is serious, in the sense that it is armed, and it represents a great danger to society, a very great danger. It is actually linked to the criminal world and is even part of that criminal world, despite the fact that it is masked by very high-flown slogans or that its representatives even have doctorates or are writers or film directors. In essence, it is a criminal opposition, linked to the criminal world. Incidentially, our fight against crime is running in conjunction with that fight. We are actually fighting against crime, and this is part and parcel of it.

[Ott] Please tell us: Where are the ideologists of your Georgian opposition? Here, in Tbilisi ... ?

[Gamsakhurdia] They are in parliament.

[Ott] But are they to be found only in Georgia, not in Moscow?

[Gamsakhurdia] They are in parliament, and there are some in Moscow too. But those in Moscow are illegal ideologists, they do not show themselves legally. Secret backers help them too, both morally and in all manner of ways. But their directly open leaders, so to speak, are here.

[Ott] For virtually the whole of today, while we have been waiting for this evening interview with you, I have had the chance to watch you a bit, and I have noticed that you are surrounded, even here in government house, by a huge number of bodyguards. Mr. Gamsakhurdia, what do you think, do you not feel too calm, comfortable, and relaxed?

[Gamsakhurdia] Incidentally, this does not originate from me. There are simply young people who are very worried about the present situation. They can see that there are so many armed formations in the city and so many criminal elements, so to speak, which are fighting for power, seeking to interfere in politics, and, so to speak, joining in it, and there is no point in concealing that they even intend to stage terrorist attacks against me.

[Ott] Have there been any?

[Gamsakhurdia] Of course, there have.

[Ott] Do you know what happened?

[Gamsakhurdia] Of course, there have been two attempts. Now, information comes in, and then one can say that they will always be agitated by it. It is their initiative, so to speak, this protection. Personally, let me tell you bluntly, I even ask them not to do it, but it is difficult.

[Ott] If you leave home for work in the morning, do you think about how to make the journey back home in the evening in order to get there at all? Do you think about that?

[Gamsakhurdia] Of course.

[Ott] Are you not afraid?

[Gamskhurdia] I see. No, my position is not that difficult, of course, but generally, that crime is very well developed, and the armed formations are very active. [passage omitted]

[Ott] One gets the impression that Georgia, beautiful Georgia, is now in some kind of isolation from the Soviet Union and, astonishingly, from the West. Can you confirm this?

[Gamsakhurdia] This is not surprising because the West looks at the Soviet Union and Russia, so everything comes from over there, that isolation.

[Ott] Did you foresee that, or was it a surprise for you?

[Gamsakhurdia] Frankly speaking, it was a surprise. I never thought that the West depended on the East to such a degree and that Western public opinion was controlled from here to such a degree. I did not expect that.

[Ott] In your view, after the latest shocks in the Soviet Union, or to be more precise, after the Soviet Union expired following the Brest accords, is the West correcting its stand on Georgia or not?

[Gamsakhurdia] Nothing has been noted so far, nothing can be seen from their part. I do not think that this is what is taking place.

[Ott] As I see it, you have quite cool relations with Western leaders.

[Gamsakhurdia] Yes, yes, they simply do not exist because they are not interested, they were not interested in the collapse of the empire. They wanted to preserve it; this is no secret. In me they saw someone who welcomed the empire's disintegration.

[Ott] What are you hoping for now, Mr. Gamsakhurdia, on your own efforts alone, or maybe you have some hopes regarding the West or the East?

[Gamsakhurdia] Mainly on our own efforts. Every state must primarily pin hopes on its own efforts.

[Ott] Are there any such efforts?

[Gamsakhurdia] Well, there is enough of them. [passage omitted]

[Ott] Incidentally, are there any political prisoners now in Georgia?

[Gamsakhurdia] Well, here again we have an issue with which we began—what we are now being accused of by the opposition. This is an example of their ignorance. They describe as political prisoners those people who committed real crimes, like stopping street traffic, erecting barricades there, picketing buildings, ejecting all the staff from the televison building, in fact using violence against the television staff and seizing the television building. They call these people prisoners of conscience, political prisoners, and so on, you know.

As for political prisoners, when we were political prisoners, we only fought using ideas and our pens. That is what political prisoners are: people arrested because of their ideas, their conscience, and their activities, as it were. That is what political prisoners are. These people are not political prisoners—they are hooligans, criminals, you understand. For instance, there is a leader of a huge gang, a paramilitary gang, and he is called a political prisoner. He plundered the population and commited huge crimes. So, the opposition does not know how to use the language; it is ignorant in these matters. Maybe some people in do count for something in their chosen fields, but, as far as these questions are concerned, they display complete ignorance and extreme lack of political maturity.

[Ott] Surely they are not all lacking in education?

[Gamsakhurdia] Well, in this respect they are uneducated, you understand. Maybe they are good specialists in their chosen fields, but here they are novices, failing to understand the meaning of the term political prisoner. I have been dealing with this all my life and, you know, I know better than they. [passage omitted]

[Ott] Have you managed to create an entourage from among people whom you really trust 100 percent, or has your cadre policy not yet been taken to its conclusion?

[Gamsakhurdia] You know, some of my opponents and even my friends say that I commit mistakes in my cadre policy. You know what I tell them? In your life how many friends have you found, how many times have your friends proved you right? How many times have you been mistaken in choosing your friends? Is it easy to choose a friend? That is what I ask them. They say that it is very difficult and virtually even impossible. That is what I say to them about my cadre policy: You look for friends, and you sometimes find an enemy. Life is like that, and mankind is like that, and in particular a country is like that, a country that, as you know, has been corrupt for 70 years. [passage omitted]

[Ott] Georgia seems to be in an incredible situation. The position of the state has no precedent. That is, Georgia is an autonomous state, but Georgia is still not recognized

by the Western countries, it is not recognized by the Soviet Union or even by those republics which in the past were striving for independence alongside Georgia.

[Gamsakhurdia] No, recognition has been given—by Romania, Moldova, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. And, now things are under way with the Ukraine.

[Ott] Talks are under way?

[Gamsakhurdia] Yes. It is just a pity that the Baltic Republics are dragging their feet.

[Ott] Excuse me, I am not up to date on this.

[Gamsakhurdia] Well, in general, it is a great pity because we travelled this path together. If it had not been for Georgia, then neither the Baltics nor Eastern Europe would have won independence, you most likely are aware of this—if it had not been for 9 April. [passage omitted]

[Ott] Since you were a dissident, the Georgian KGB and, naturally, the Georgian Party Central Committee, where Eduard Amvrosyevich Shevardnadze held a post for many years, kept you under close observation. What is you personal attitude to Mr. Shevardnadze?

[Gamsakhurdia] Well, what attitude can there be between opponents who all their lives have served completely opposite things?

[Ott] Have you ever had private conversations with him?

[Gamsakhurdia] Yes, we did have, but it was a long time ago. We have had telephone conversations recently, too, during this period.

[Ott] But it seems that Gamsakhurdia has not changed very much. Has Shevardnadze changed, in your view?

[Gamsakhurdia] I think that he has not changed, either. He has not changed at all. He has simply changed his mask, but in fact he has remained the same.

[Ott] In your view, has Shevardnadze supported Georgia's striving for freedom and independence over the past few years?

[Gamsakhurdia] Just the contrary. And he does not conceal this.

[Ott] Can you see this?

[Gamsakhurdia] Of course. He does not conceal this; he states this directly. He did not take part in the referendum and did not cast his vote for Georgia's independence. He does not conceal this. He believes that Georgia should remain part of Russia, that Georgia will perish without Russia, and that for Georgia the sun is rising in the north—those are his words.

[Ott] So you have quite complicated mutual relations with Mr. Shevardnadze?

[Gamsakhurdia] Of course.

[Ott] Mr. Gamsakhurdia, one gets the impression that during your presidency you have been trying to have as little contact with Moscow as possible. You visit Moscow very seldom.

[Gamsakhurdia] Yes, I have visited it only twice during the presidential term.

[Ott] Does the place not attract you?

[Gamsakhurdia] Not at all. I have suffered so many tortures and repressions in Moscow that, on the contrary ...

[Ott] What repressions? What do you have in mind?

[Gamsakhurdia] Moscow prisons.

[Ott] You were imprisoned there, too?

[Gamsakhurdia] Yes. [passage omitted]

[Ott] What are the main problems that Georgia is now facing?

[Gamsakhurdia] Georgia is facing very difficult problems: it has got to find a way out, a way out of the existing situation under which our whole economy is interwoven with the economy of the former Soviet Union, and it has got to achieve self-determination, as it were, economic self-determination. That is the main thing. Of course, we are also aiming to implement all reforms in such a way as to avoid damaging state power and state structures. That is also very difficult. So, there are very many problems like that.

[Ott] Do you think these problems are resolvable in the long term?

[Gamsakhurdia] I think so.

[Ott] What place among all these problems would you allocate to the Ossetian problem.

[Gamsakhurdia] A very important place. The leadership of the former empire is deliberately trying to worsen this problem. They are using it to put pressure on Georgia; Soviet troops are helping [word indistinct] extremists, and a terrible war is being waged against the Georgian people.

[Ott] So, is war being truly waged there?

[Gamsakhurdia] Yes, almost.

[Ott] Pardon me for asking. I do not know much about Georgian history. To whom does that territory belong?

[Gamsakhurdia] There is no question about it: Ossetia is part of Georgia, an inalienable part of Georgia. But they want to declare now that they are part of the RSFSR. So, generally things are not going well.

[Ott] But as I understand you will not be amending your policy on this question, will you?

[Gamsakhurdia] No, no. What amendments are you talking about? We will not give up that territory.

[Ott] Do you think that this problem can be resolved in the fullness of time?

[Gamsakhurdia] It all depends on what is now going on in the former Union. That is what it depends on.

[Ott] Do you think the Soviet Union exists today, on 10 December, now that the Brest treaty has been signed?

[Gamsakhurdia] It is impossible to say whether it exists. The situation is confused. It has not yet been abolished or scrapped formally. De facto it does not exist but de jure it seems to exist. So I cannot tell.

[Ott] Do I understand you correctly that neither you nor Georgia is too concerned about what took place in Brest a few days ago.

[Gamsakhurdia] No, I am not concerned. We cannot tell anything yet. What is going on has no clear outlines. But we welcome the very fact that they declared ... that they told the truth about the USSR and that they want to set up independent states. [passage omitted]

[Ott] How are Georgian communists acting, following the August putsch?

[Gamsakhurdia] How are they supposed to act when we have effectively banished them from parliament and banned the Communist party? The life they lead is such that they are taking part in a conspiracy against me. Most of the actions now taking place here have been organized by them. Yesterday's action, for instance, was led by a former rayon committee secretary who is a very active communist. They are now conducting actions against me. That is natural. [passage omitted]

[Ott] Mr. Gamsakhurdia, how often are you in touch with President Gorbachev, if that is what he still is?

[Gamsakhurdia] Not very often, but sometimes.

[Ott] Does he call you, or is it the other way around?

[Gamsakhurdia] Generally, he calls me.

[Ott] What subjects do you discuss?

[Gamsakhurdia] Matters concerning the Union treaty, for example, and so on.

[Ott] Has he put proposals to you?

[Gamsakhurdia] Very often.

[Ott] Really?

[Gamsakhurdia] Almost every day I receive a message saying that I should come to Novo-Ogarevo, that we should discuss that treaty and so on, but I say that we do not want even to discuss it, that there is nothing to discuss.

[Ott] So, it looks as though President Gorbachev feels that Georgia is still part of his country.

[Gamsakhurdia] Indeed that is true in some places. Somewhere they do not want to part with that illusion.

[Ott] Do you get on well with Yeltsin, for example? Do you think Yeltsin is doing justice to certain hopes of his people regarding Russia's future?

[Gamsakhurdia] It is hard to say yet, very hard. Unfortunately, our relations have changed slightly. They used to be good, but they have been hampered by some forces which want to ruin relations between Russia and Georgia.

[Ott] What is your attitude to Stalin? Some people, perhaps your opponents, believe that, so to speak, Stalin is probably some kind of idol for Gamsakhurdia. They suspect that you are also striving for Stalinism.

[Gamsakhurdia] If Stalin were alive today, they would see. He would show them. I have actually fought against Stalinism all my life, but slanderers have known throughout the ages that the thing to do is to pile up accusations that a person supports what he really opposes, you see.

[Ott] But you know your people very well, you know the emotional background of your people and certain of their thoughts. Tell me, do many in Georgia now idealize Stalin?

[Gamsakhurdia] No. Those times are already a thing of the past. They still existed some three years ago, even about two years ago, but not since we did an immense amount of work and actually abolished the Stalin Society. I actually abolished it during the election campaign and managed to ban that society outright, and I barred it from taking part in the election because it wanted to take part in the election. Since then, that danger has actually disappeared altogether. Well, there are some old people, veterans, but you get that everywhere. [passage omitted]

[Ott] Do you intend, in the end, to create some sort of Union, for example with Armenia or Azerbaijan? Or do you want to be totally autonomous?

[Gamsakhurdia] I am not obsessed with this mania for a union in the way that some people are. They want a union in some form or other. But this question has not come up here yet. A commonwealth is one thing. I find a commonwealth more to my liking. But the word union immediately recalls the empire. As regards a union, excuse me, but we fear the very word.

[Ott] What do you think—if the situation in Georgia becomes stabilized will the ban remain on the Communist Party?

[Gamsakhurdia] Undoubtedly. In our opinion the Communist Party is a criminal organization and has no right to exist.

[Ott] Is that your final ...

[Gamsakhurdia] That is my opinion.

[Ott] Are there any groupings in the Georgian parliament now, any parliamentary opposition?

[Gamsakhurdia] Yes. There are three groupings very hostile to the main party.

[Ott] The main grouping is...?

[Gamsakhurdia] The Roundtable Organization.

[Ott] And Free Georgia?

[Gamsakhurdia] Yes, that's right. [passage omitted]

[Ott] Thank you for this interview and, literally, my last question. Before you go to sleep at home, after a long and hard-working day, what do you pray to God for?

[Gamsakhurdia] I pray only for the good of my homeland and mankind. [passage omitted]

President Urges Citizens Not To Confront Army

LD1712222791 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1950 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Georgia's president: Our attitude to the military servicemen should not develop into hatred of mankind nor into excesses which can put us in front of a serious danger.

On December 16, Zviad Gamsakhurdia in his TV address to the people called also upon his countrymen to restrain from confronting the Soviet Army. Currently, he said, the status of these Armed Forces is quite undetermined, and they can undertake such actions which can be equal to a national disaster for us. Gamsakhurdia assured that a decree will be issued in the Republic on defense of the human and civil rights of the military men. Lt.-Gen. Supian Bepayev, deputy chief of the Armed Forces of the Transcaucasian Military District, who was speaking after Georgia's president, said that the Army's position is non-interference into the internal affairs of the Republic of Georgia, especially as far as the Tskhinvali conflict is concerned. He resolutely turned down unfoundeu accusations of the violation of the neutral position by the Army. Bepayev also declared that the Armed Forces of the Transcaucasian Military District do not support any relations with those servicemen who are in the camp of Mr. Kitovani in the region of the Tbilisi Sea. As long as our Armed Forces fulfill a responsible task in the frames of a united defense space, they will reliably provide for security of the southern borders of our motherland, assured Bepayev.

Ammunitions Depot, Army Storehouses Destroyed

LD1712225491 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1906 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Military News" section]

[Text] Ammunitions depot and 2 army storehouses were destroyed on the night of December 16, in Akhaltsikhe (Georgia). Unknown persons opened grenade fire at ammunitions depot of the Akhaltsikh division. The resulting fire led to the explosion of artillery shells and other ammunition. Two storehouses were also destroyed in the fire. No casualties are reported.

Minister Sees Commonwealth in 'Positive Light'

LD1712171491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] In an interview for Radio Liberty, Georgian Prime Minister Vissarion Gugushvili has assessed in a positive light the creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States by Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus.

In reply to a correspondent's question on the possibility of Georgia associating itself with the union of the three, the prime minister stated that the Georgian Government is ready to cooperate in the economic sphere. As for political questions, the president of Georgia proposed to Boris Yeltsin that relations between Georgia and Russia be restored on the basis of the treaty of friendship concluded in the 1920's. Gugushvili noted that we hope to conclude corresponding treaties with the Ukraine, Belarus, and other already independent states of the former Soviet Union. Only when Georgia is recognized as an independent country, not only by these republics but also by the countries of the West, will we examine questions concerning any political unions at all, the Georgian prime minister stressed.

Touching upon the problem of the withdrawal of units of the USSR Armed Forces on the territory of the republic, the prime minister stated that the Georgian Government proposed to the servicemen that they remain and continue service, but as part of the armed forces of Georgia.

Interrepublic Affairs

Further on Central Asian Ashkhabad Meeting

Pricing Policy Considered

LD1812005291 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent K. Babayev on a meeting of deputy heads of government of the Central Asian Republics and Kazakhstan in Ashkhabad on 17 December; from the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] An accord to hold such meetings on a regular basis was reached in August this year. Participants in today's meeting worked on an agreement on pricing policy as a measure to provide the population with social protection from the negative consequences of forthcoming price rises in other republics of the former Union. For example, up to 70 percent of essential foodstuffs and industrial commodities are brought into Turkmenistan from the RSFSR, Belarus, and Ukraine. It is intended to complete the formation of an interstate committee to coordinate the social and economic development of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan by 1 January 1992. Also envisaged is the creation of an interstate issuing bank [emissionnyy bank]. It is well known that a meeting is scheduled very shortly between the heads of most of the independent states of the former Union. Would it not have been more expedient to hold the meeting all together, so to speak?

[Begin Ye. G. Yezhikov-Babakhanov, Kazakh first deputy prime minister, recording] That meeting will examine the purely political aspects of maintaining our commonwealth within the framework of the former Union. Here, we have come together to continue the conversation begun last year on integrating the economies of the Central Asian Republics and Kazakhstan. This is essential since this area is especially important for raw materials, and there are common problems linked to power supply, fuel, and water resources. All these particular features need to be considered. Today, under conditions where economic relations throughout the country are ill-defined, it seems to us that it would be possible to integrate our efforts within the framework of these Republics, which are situated closely together and linked fairly closely together from the point of view of their economies. [end recording]

Market Reforms Urged

OW1812041391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1705 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The on-going meeting of the deputy heads of the Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen republics in Ashkabad, capital of Turkmenistan, has been "called upon to develop a general approach to introducing market reforms." The Turkmenistan Presidential press spokesman informed "IF" [INTERFAX] of this Tuesday [17 December].

It is surmised that during the course of the meeting an agreement will be signed on price policies. It is also possible that an inter-state emissions bank will be created and an inter-state committee formed on coordinating the socio-economic development in the republics of Central Asia and Kazakhstan.

A.Orazdurdyev, press spokesman for the Turkmen President, said that Turkmenistan is also investigating the possibility of introducing its own national currency. If any of those republics entering the united economic territory of republics introduce their own currency, however,then the other republics will be forced to take similar measures.

Cooperation Planned

LD1812123591 Moscow TASS in English 1104 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Text] Ashkhabad December 18 (TASS) - Four former Soviet Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan agreed to cooperate late on Tuesday [17 December] at a meeting of their interrepublican council in Ashkhabad.

Four of the five republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) decided, in particular, on the joint construction of a railway link from the Turkmen city of Tedzhen to the town of Serakhs, bordering on iran. All the republics will also join efforts in using Caspian Sea ports and observe agreements on mutual shipments of goods.

A new interrepublican meeting will be held in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) on 23 December to settle the problems of the future release of prices from state control.

All the five republics approved the status of their Interrepublican Consultative Committee, which will engage in defining common economic reforms with due consideration of the interests of each sovereign republic.

News Conference Held

PM1712140591 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

["Our correspondent" report: "Also in Favor of the Commonwealth, But With Amendments"]

[Text] The presidents of five former Union republics, now independent states—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—signed a joint statement in Ashkhabad 13 December. This document assesses the Minsk agreement on the creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. In particular, it recognizes that the Minsk initiative to set up the CIS "is positive," but it stresses: "The agreement on this came as a surprise to us."

The conference participants agreed with the statement of fact that the "process of fresh integration among the subjects of the former USSR... is deadlocked" and acknowledged the need to coordinate efforts to form the CIS. Stressing particularly—only on an equal footing and as founders.

At the news conference following the signing of the statement, the meeting's participants answered journalists' questions. Broaching the position held by M. Gorbachev of late, Nursultan Nazarbayev described it as "having nothing in common with the real state of affairs." The Kazakh president also spoke over the telephone with B. Yeltsin, who confirmed his agreement to holding a meeting of the Commonwealth's cofounders in the near future in a southern city.

The Kyrgyz president did not refrain from criticizing M. Gorbachev either. In Askar Akayev's opinion, the USSR president missed a chance of signing the Union Treaty on a confederative basis, something that most of the sovereign republics were inclined to do. However, Akayev thinks that there may also be a place for Gorbachev in the new processes.

Uzbek President Islam Karimov, who said at the meeting that Uzbekistan will only decide its attitude to the CIS once and for all after 29 December (nationwide Uzbek presidential election day), by and large approved the idea of the Commonwealth, mainly insofar as an economic agreement is concerned, but warned against attempts to make the Central Asian region the supplier of raw materials to the Commonwealth's European republics.

To wind up the news conference it was said that Central Asia and Kazakhstan can pride themselves on the consistent positive role they have played in the political arena in the dramatic history of recent years.

Kazakhstan

Statement Issued on Gorbachev Territory Claims

PM1712140991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Colonel A. Ladin report under "Direct Line" rubric: "Parliament Disagrees"]

[Text] Alma-Ata—The Kazakh Supreme Soviet has issued a statement on M. Gorbachev's reasoning on possible territorial claims on one another by the states that have decided to leave the Union as voiced in the USSR president's interview with Ukrainian Television. Gorbachev claims, the statement says, that during the opening up of the virgin lands Russia supposedly transferred to Kazakhstan five northern oblasts... "Only someone who is either unfamiliar with history or someone who deliberately wants to sow the seeds of mistrust and discord between neighboring states that have embarked on the path of independence," the document stresses, "can make such a statement."

The Kazakh Supreme Soviet finds this claim by the country's top official inadmissible.

The document states that the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan is unified and indivisible. This is enshrined in its Constitution and declaration of state sovereignty and also in the treaty between the RSFSR and the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic signed 21 November 1990 and the communique on the results of the talks between the Kazakh and RSFSR delegations of 30 August 1991.

U.S. Secretary of State Arrives for Visit

LD1712182891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1610 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By KAZTAG-TASS correspondent Gennadiy Kulagin]

[Text] Alma-Ata, 17 Dec (TASS)—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrived in the Kazakhstan capital from Bishkek for a short working visit late this evening. At the airport he was welcomed by Yerik Asanbayev, republican vice president, and other officials.

James Baker and Nursultan Nazarbayev, president of Kazakhstan, are expected to have a tete-a-tete meeting tonight. Later the secretary of state will have talks with republican leaders.

Talks With Nazarbayev Held

LD1812133591 Alma-Ata Kazakh Radio Network in Russian 1050 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Text] Nursultan Nazarbayev, president of the Republic of Kazakhstan, held a meeting with James Baker, United States Secretary of State, in the residence assigned to the eminent guest. Mr. Baker arrived in Alma-Ata yesterday, 17 December.

A one-to-one conversation between Nazarbayev and Baker lasted over two hours without a break. At its conclusion, news conference was arranged for representatives of Kazakhstan, central and foreign mass media.

Replying to questions from the journalists, the president noted that close and friendly contacts had been established between himself and the Secretary of State. This is the second visit by James Baker to Kazakhstan in a short period. Apart from that, they are constantly in touch by telephone, consulting on the major issues of interstate relations.

This time great attention was paid to the situation that has developed in the country following the famous meeting in Belarus. There was discussion of the complex of problems that have arisen in connection with the new realities, the proclamation of the state independence of Kazakhstan and other republics of the former Union,

versions of the possible development of events and prospects for bilateral economic cooperation.

Nazarbayev reported that a meeting is planned in Alma-Ata on 21 December of the leaders of at least nine republics, at which, he hopes, there will be a coming together of their positions on the basis of the proposals put forward in Ashkhabad. The Kazakhstan side intends to raise the question of concluding an agreement between the four states on whose territory Soviet nuclear weapons are located, with the aim of ensuring single control and the nonproliferation of this arsenal, thereby removing the anxiety of the international public on this score.

The head of the foreign policy department of the United States, speaking at the news conference, assessed his constant contacts with the president of Kazakhstan as very useful and fruitful. Speaking of the nuclear problem, Baker said the issue was discussed widely and in detail at their meeting, especially those aspects which are connected with the transformations of the process. Kazakhstan unarguably plays a key role in this, as does its leader, Nazarbayev.

The Secretary of State told the journalists that today they also examined speculatively [v postanovochnom plane] the question of United States recognition of the independent Republic of Kazakhstan.

This morning the United States Secretary of State left Alma-Ata for Minsk.

Baker, Nazarbayev 'Satisfied'

LD1812080191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0700 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Text] The meeting between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev ended late yesterday evening. It was held behind closed doors and continued for over two hours. After it ended, James Baker and Nursultan Nazarbayev met Soviet and foreign correspondents. They stated that they were satisfied with the conversation, which took place in an amiable and frank atmosphere. Replying to a question, James Baker said that some topics, especially concerning nuclear weapons, were of a confidential nature. He believes that in the present circumstances such confidentiality is essential.

Baker is to leave Alma-Ata today for Minsk and then Kiev. The purpose of this trip is to find out for himself about the situation in the former USSR, to obtain guarantees of the preservation of unified control over the nuclear button, and to discuss issues of U.S. aid to the republics.

Nazarbayev Issues Statement

PM1812153791 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 18 Dec 91 p 1

[Correspondent Ye. Dotsuk report: "Ama-Ata Does Not Trust Tears"]

[Text] After his meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Baker Kazakh President N. Nazarbayev issued the following press announcement:

"I did not disguise my attitude toward the Brest agreement from Mr. Baker. My position has been quite clearly expounded to the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, and I had also expounded it quite clearly in the mass media before. It was also reflected in the final document of our Ashkhabad meeting.

"Unfortunately, the initiators of the Commonwealth of Independent States have not shown due understanding, at least not in the initial stage. It is difficult, for example, to accept that only a few, albeit the most important republics, can be the "founding fathers" of the future union, while the rest merely affiliate to it.

"Everything should be resolved, in my view, solely by civilized methods and on a joint, equal basis.

"I have spoken on this topic with all the participants in the Minsk meeting—Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich—and note with gratitude that they regard the prevailing situation with understanding. And they, the participants in the Ashkhabad meeting, plus certain other heads of state have accepted the proposal to hold a meeting in Alma-Ata to jointly discuss and modify positions and find an acceptable solution—at any rate for the overwhelming majority of the former republics—taking account of the interests of those who are still not ready to join the Commonwealth at present."

Kyrgyzstan

U.S. Secretary of State Baker Visits

Arrives From Moscow

LD1712173191 Bishkek Radio Bishkek Network in Russian 1400 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrived in Bishkek from Moscow today. He is making a working trip around our country. On his trip Baker is accompanied by Robert Strauss, U.S. ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the USSR, and high-ranking officials of the U.S. State Department.

At the capital's Manas airport, the eminent guest was welcomed by Akayev, president of the Republic of Kyrgystan. The welcoming party included Sherimkulov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Kyrgyzstan; Kuznetsov, vice president of the republic; Koychuyev, secretary of state of the Cabinet of Ministers; Sutalinov, chairman of the Bishkek City Soviet; Dzhumagulov and Sadykov, chairmen of oblast soviets of people's deputies; Bakayev, chairman of the National Security Committee; Imanaliyev, minister of foreign affairs of the republic; Kulov, minister of intern... affairs of the republic; Karabayev, head of the presidential staff and minister; and other officials.

According to tradition, girls in national costume presented the guest with bread and salt and flowers.

From the airport the auto convoy set off for the residence allocated for the U.S. secretary of state, where he held talks with President Akayev and other leaders of the republic.

Akayev, Baker Hold Closed Talks

OW1712162391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1500 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Talks between Kyrghyzstan's President Askar Akayev and the visiting US Secretary of State James Baker have proceeded in Bishkek behind closed doors. IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent quotes the presidential press service as soon as the talks are over, Mr. Akayev and Mr. Baker will make brief statements for the press. Thereafter the guest will leave for Alma-Ata, capital of Kazakhstan, and from that city (on Wednesday [18 December]) for the Belorussian capital Minsk.

News Conference Held

LD1712182191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1600 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Zoya Ismatulina]

[Text] Bishkek, 17 Dec (TASS)—Before his trip to Kazakhstan, James Baker made a short visit to the capital of Kyrgyzstan. He met the president of the republic, Askar Akayev.

After the meeting there was a brief news conference. Opening it, the Kyrgyz president described the meeting as very intense: There was discussion of a broad range of questions, in particular on the creation and emergence of the new Commonwealth, the development of relations between the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the United States, and other questions.

Answering journalists' questions, the U.S. secretary of state stressed the Kyrgyzstan president's adherence to the cause of reforms and democracy. "We discussed the changes taking place here in Kyrgyzstan," he noted. "This is one of the reasons why I decided to come here. We would like future changes to take place peaceably, more smoothly. That is in the interests not only of the United States but of the whole world." James Baker expressed the hope that the meeting on 21 December in Alma-Ata will be fruitful and that the republics will sign the agreement.

The old Union ceased to exist on 5 September 1991, when the last Congress of People's Deputies handed power in the country over to the supreme bodies of power of the republics, Askar Akayev said. And the final period was placed by the referendum on the independence of Ukraine. Answering a question on the role of President Mikhail Gorbachev in the new Commonwealth, Askar Akayev said this would largely depend on the position which Gorbachev himself would adopt. The president of Kyrgyzstan said Mikhail Gorbachev has not yet formulated his position. Akayev highly appraised relations with Russia and expressed confidence that Kyrgyzstan and Russia will always find a common language and cooperate fruitfully. It is quite probable that Russia will keep the USSR's place in the Security Council; I would support that, he said. The president of Kyrgyzstan highly approved of the fact that the United States has undertaken to coordinate and regulate the process of assisting democratic reforms in our country. I hope that this will help us in a decisive period to implement the peaceful transition to the emergence of the Commonwealth, he said.

In Bishkek the U.S. secretary of state also talked to a broad range of officials.

Akayev Comments on Nuclear Weapons

LD1712194491 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1700 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By correspondent Aleksandr Mirtov; from the "New Wave" program]

[Text] I have returned from the suburban residence which was allocated to the U.S. delegation. It was here that a meeting took place between U.S. Secretary of State Baker and Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev. James Baker and Askar Akayev first held a 40-minute tete-a-tete, and then conducted a news conference for Soviet and American journalists.

James Baker stressed that the basis for his present visit to our country is to discuss two questions with the leaders of the sovereign states. First of all, it is to find out their position with regard to nuclear safety and the control of armaments. The second question deals with humanitarian aid to the republics.

Naturally, a lot of questions were asked by both American journalists and by their Soviet colleagues. They were interested in questions relating to whether our republic has nuclear weapons. President Akayev responded to that by saying that Kyrgyzstan does not have, and never had, any nuclear armaments on its territory—if one disregards the fact that our republic is the raw material supplier, as it has uranium deposits which represent the ingredient for these nuclear armaments.

From my point of view an interesting question was asked of our president by a U.S. journalist: Do you think that the Central Asian republics and Kyrgyzstan will play second fiddle in the Union of Sovereign States? To this President Akayev answered firmly and confidently that very good relations have been formed between Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation, the largest republic—and the treaty concluded in Bishkek this summer,

when we received Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin here, gives grounds to think that this is a treaty of equal partners.

It was noted at this short briefing—James Baker stressed this in particular—that the United States would above all prefer that the changes and transformations taking place in our country now be carried out peacefully and calmly.

Baker Comments on Recognition

OW1812032091 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1705 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Tuesday [17 December], President of Kyrgyzstan Askar Akayev and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker met in Bishkek to discuss the future of the new commonwealth of republics and relations between Kyrgyzstan and the U.S. The subject of the talks was revealed to journalists by Mr. Akayev after his meeting with James Baker.

The talks were held in Mr. Akayev's suburban residence, Ala-Archa, and were also attended by U.S. Ambassador to the USSR, Robert Strauss, Assistant Secretary of State for Policy Planning, Mr. Dennis Ross, and Mr. Akayev's adviser, Leonid Livitin.

Mr. Baker told journalists that no U.S. official had ever visited Kyrgyzstan before. He also said that in the brief period since Mr. Akayev was elected president, he had demonstrated his strong adherence to reforms and democracy.

Speaking about the recognition of the former Soviet ropublics which have proclaimed their independence, including Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Baker said that this process very much would depend on the talks between the republic leaders in Alma-Ata, on December 21.

President Briefs Supreme Soviet on Baker Talks

LD1812121191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1000 GMT 18 Dec 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev addressed the republican Supreme Soviet session today and discussed the results of his meeting with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. Akayev said that they discussed questions concerning the Commonwealth of Independent States in the course of the meeting. Baker expressed an interest in Kyrgyzstan's relations with other republics, in particular with Russia and with President Boris Yeltsin. Akayev said that the United States closely examined the question of most-favored-nation treatment for the former Union republics, including Kyrgyzstan as a state with a democratic system.

President Decrees Formation of National Guard

LD1712215191 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Dec 91

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] A Kyrgyz national guard is being established through a decree by Kyrgyz President Akayev, published today.

Akayev Interviewed on Turkish Relations

LD1712171891 Moscow TASS in English 1615 GMT 17 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Litvinenko]

[Text] Ankara December 17 TASS—The Turkic-speaking republics favour boosting economic and cultural cooperation with Turkey, President Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan said in an interview with the Turkish newspaper CUMHURIYET published today.

"The problem of pan-Turkism was put on the agenda but did not reach threatening proportions," Akayev said.

"We follow closely current developments in Turkey and would like to improve our relations with this country. No one can refute the fact that Turkey today represents a strong centre. We would like to open Kyrgyzstan's economy to the outside world and give Turkey special preference," Akayev pointed out.

He said Kyrgyzstan is fully determined to maitain relations with all countries, including its neighbours—the Central Asian Republics—on the basis of mutual respect.

"Those who seek a unification of the Turkic-speaking peoples are growing in number. This desire, however, is far from the realisation of the ideas of pan-Turkism. If we attain an economic upturn in Kyrgyzstan, I do not see the danger of pan-Turkism or pan-Islamism. But if we fail to achieve what we have planned, the emergence of these movements is quite real," Akayev said.

Tajikistan

Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Republic Formed

LD1712204691 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] A new autonomous republic has appeared on the map of the former Soviet Union. Yet another one. This one is called the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Republic. According to a report from Dushanbe, such a decision was made by deputies of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast. Well, yet another oblast in our country has pronounced itself a republic.

Army To Help Deliver Aid to Gorno-Badakhshan

PM1712151391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 14 Dec 91 First Edition p 5

["Our correspondent" report: "Along the Pamir Highway"]

[Text] At the request of the Tajikistan Government the commander of the Turkestan Military District has decided to give urgent aid to the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast by delivering food and fuel. The formation of a motor transport company of 100 heavy transporters is being completed. Colonel L. Golub will command the subunit. The trucks will transport coal, firewood, and produce from the city of Osh through the Pamir's numerous passes. Experienced drivers are being called up from the reserves.

Turkmenia

President Niyazov Addresses Council on Prices

LD1712223491 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1900 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Turkmenian president says Turkmenia will begin liberalization of prices simultaneously with Russia, but subsidies on some foodstuffs and farm produce will be introduced on December 17. Turkmen President Saparmurat Niyazov addressed an expanded session of the Presidential Council, which was attended by senior executives of ministries and institutions, as well as the leading economists of the republic. [sentence as received] He said that the money needed for subsidizing foodstuffs and implementing some of the social programs will be obtained by Turkmenistan by raising prices of export commodities. Natural gas will cost up to 210 roubles per 1,000 cubic meters, gas condensate—up to 370 roubles per ton, liquefied gas—up to 522 roubles per ton. A ton of oil will cost no less than 372 roubles, a ton of cotton—45,000 roubles, Niyazov said. According to Niyazov, the republic will export goods to members of the new community at negotiated and not world prices, because members of the former USSR cannot pay them. He also said that the transfer to new prices in trade with other republics will create a positive balance of payment amounting to 23 billion roubles. The Turkmen Government intends to spend most of this money on social protection measures.

According to Niyazov, next year the privatization of the industrial sphere and the transfer of enterprises to collective, joint-stock and private property will be carried out at a rapid pace. For the first time ever the Turkmen president allowed a possibility of private ownership of the property that previously belonged to the state and announced a plan of creating a private sector in the republic. Republican ministries and institutions will soon build near Ashkhabad at their expense 200 small enterprises of various types. They will be sold on an installment plan to local entrepreneurs. The president did not rule out a possibility of those small enterprises belonging to businessmen from other countries, and primarily Turkey, with which Turkmenistan will develop especially close relations.

In the opinion of the Turkmen president, it is necessary to introduce cheque books in the republic for bringing down the impact of the shortage of cash facing Turkmenia.

Price Liberalization Decision Adopted

LD1812001291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1519 GMT 17 Dec 91

[Text] Ashkhabad, 17 Dec (TASS)—A decision on the liberalization of prices to a timescale to coincide with that of Russia has been adopted in Turkmenistan, Saparmurad Niyazov, the republican president, has reported.

Speaking at an extended conference of the Presidential Council here, the head of the Turkmenian state stressed that this measure has been brought about through the deep extent of the integration of the republics of the former Union and through the need to create preconditions to insure the functioning of the unified economic space formed by the sovereign states. At the same time the question of the mechanism of the social protection of the population assumes main importance. In Turkmenistan wages will increase almost threefold, a planned measure which is due to cost over 21 billion rubles [R]. The minimum living wage is being set at R350. The president noted that a further lowering of the standard of living of the people must be opposed by all means possible.